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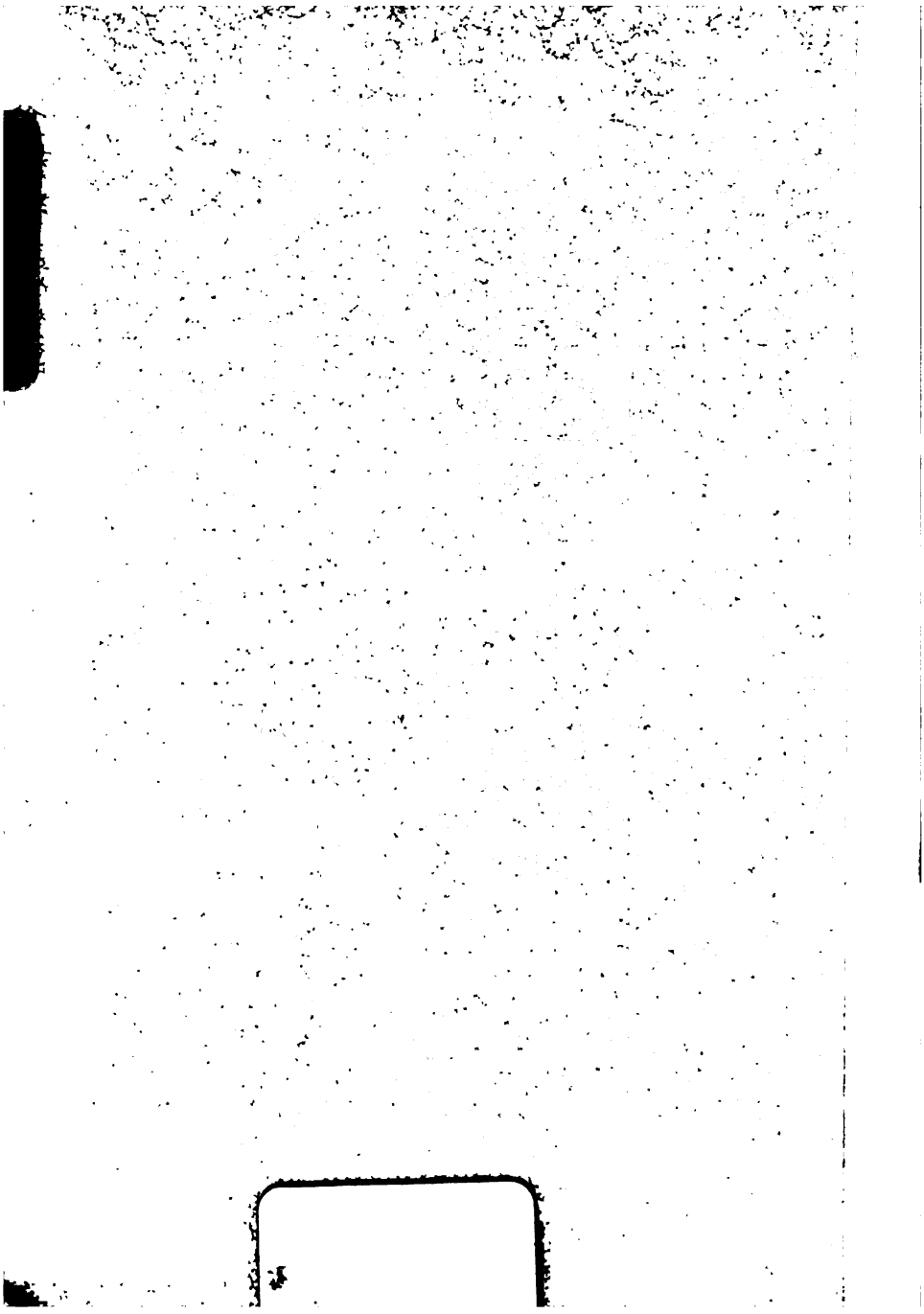

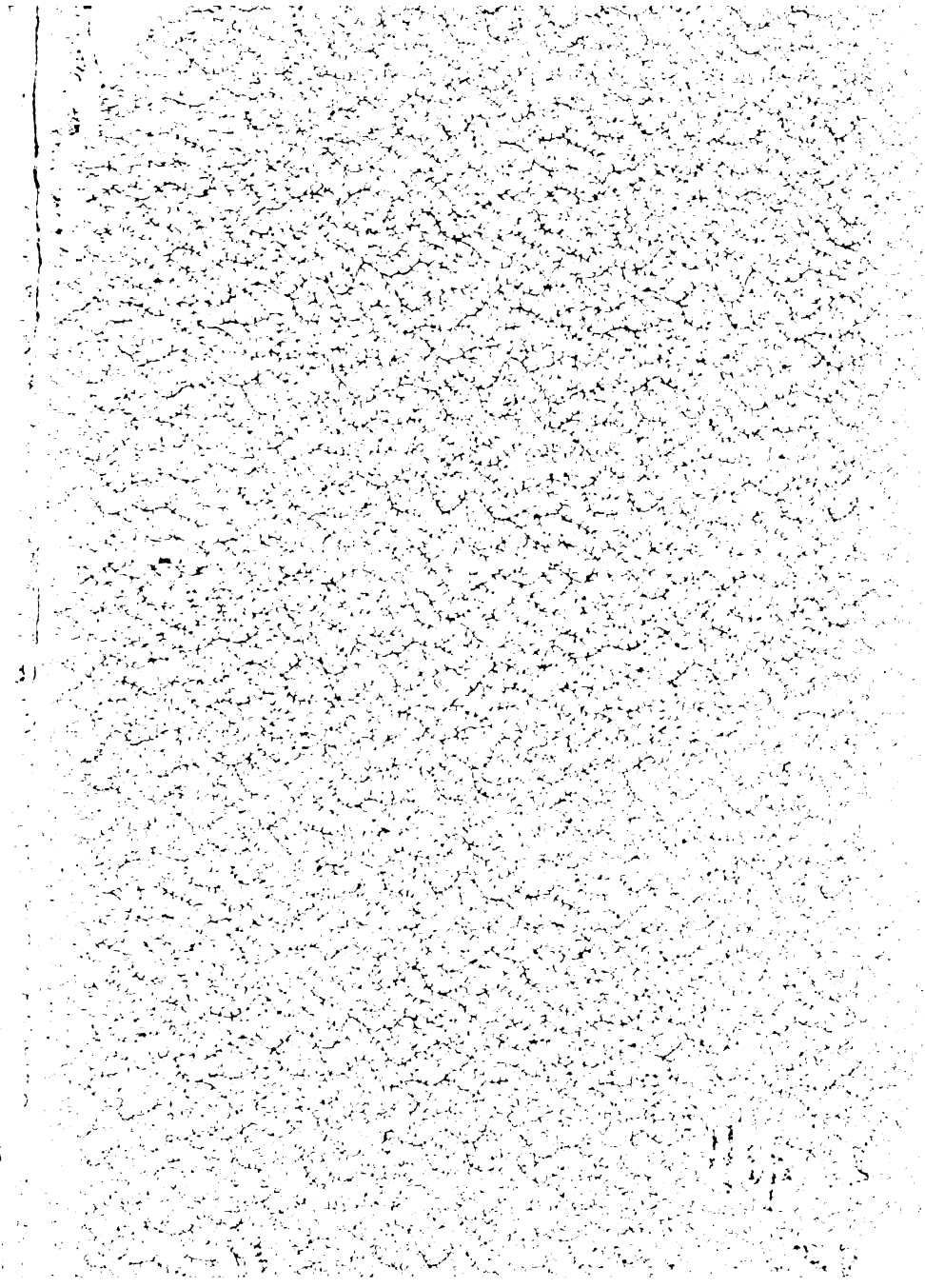

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PANORAMA OF NAPLES, FROM VILLA TOLENTINO.

NAPLES
PAST & PRESENT

By ARTHUR H. NORWAY
AUTHOR OF "HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN DEVON AND CORNWALL," "PARSON PETER," ETC.

WITH 24 PHOTOGRAVURE ILLUSTRATIONS AND 32 ENGRAVINGS IN HALF-TONE

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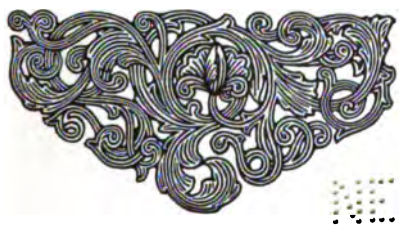

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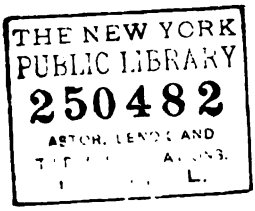

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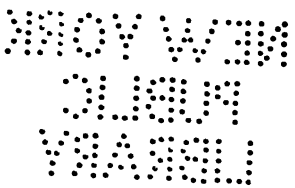

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To my friends

BARON AND BARONESS MARIO NOLLI

of Naples, and of Ari in the Abruzzi

I dedicate this book in token that those who are divided by both sea and land may yet be united in their love for Italy.

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NAPLES

PAST AND PRESENT.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER I.

THE APPROACH TO NAPLES BY THE SEA.

On a fine spring morning when the sun, which set last night in gold and purple behind the jagged mountain chain of Corsica, had but just climbed high enough to send out shafts and flashes of soft light across the opalescent sea, I came up on the deck of the great steamer which carried me from Genoa to watch for the first opening of the Bay of Naples. It was so early that the decks were very quiet. There was no sound but the perpetual soft rustle of the wave shed off from the bow of the steamer, which slipped on silently without sense of motion. The Ponza Islands were in sight, desolate and precipitous, showing on their dark cliffs no

house nor any sign of life, save here and there a sea-bird winging its solitary way round the crags and caverns of the coast. Far ahead, in the direction of our course, lay one or two dim, cloudy masses, too faint and shadowy to be detached as yet from the grey skyline which bounded the crystalline sparkles of the sea. And so, having strained my eyes in vain effort to discover the high peak of Ischia, I fell to wondering why any man who is at liberty to choose his route should dream of approaching this Campanian coast otherwise than by the sea.

For Naples is the city of the siren—"Parthenope," sacred to one of those sea nymphs whose marvellous sweet singing floated out across the waves and lured the ancient seamen rowing by in their strange old galleys, shaped after a fashion now long since forgotten, and carrying merchandise from cities which thirty centuries ago and more were "broken by the sea in the depths of the waters" so that "all the company in the midst of them did fail." How many generations had the line of sailors stretched among whom Parthenope wrought havoc before

Ulysses sailed by her rock, and saw the heaps of whitening bones, and last of all men heard the wondrous melodies which must have lured him too, but for the tight thongs which bound him to the mast! So Parthenope and her two sisters cast themselves into the sea and perished, as the old prediction said they must when first a mariner went by their rock unscathed. But her drowned body floated over the blue sea till it reached the shore at Naples, and somewhere near the harbour the wondering people built her a shrine which was doubtless rarely lovely, and is mentioned by Strabo, the old Greek geographer, as being shown still in his day, not long after the birth of Christ.

There is now but little navigation on these seas compared with the relative importance of the shipping that came hither in old days. Naples is in our day outstripped by Genoa, and hard run, even for the goods of southern Italy, by Brindisi and Taranto. The trade of Rome goes largely to Leghorn. If Ostia were ever purged of fever and rebuilt, or if the schemes for deepening the Tiber so as to allow large vessels to discharge at Rome were

carried out, we might see the port of Naples decline as that of Pozzuoli did for the self-same reason, the broad facts which govern the course of trade being the same to-day as they were three thousand years ago. Even now it is rather the convenience of passengers and mails than the necessities of merchants which take the great ocean steamers into Naples. It is not easy for men who realise these facts to remember that the waters of the Campanian coast have more than once been ploughed by the chief shipping of the world. Far back in the dawn of history, where nothing certain can be distinguished of the deeds of men or nations, the presence of traders, Phœnician and Greek, can be inferred upon these shores. The antiquity of shipping is immense and measureless. Year by year the spade, trenching on the sites of ancient civilisation, drives back by centuries the date at which man's intellect began to gather science; and no one yet can put his finger on any point of time and say, "within this space man did not understand the use of sail or oar." The earliest seamen of whom we know anything at all were doubtless the suc-

cessors of many a generation like themselves. It cannot be much less than a thousand years before Christ was born when Greek ships were crossing the sea which washed their western coasts bound for Sicily and the Campanian shores. Yet how many ages must have passed between the days when the Greeks first went afloat and those in which they dared push off toward the night side of the world, where the mariners of the dead went to and fro upon the sea, where the expanse of ocean lay unbroken by the shelter of any friendly island, and both winds and currents beat against them in their course, or even by coasting up and down the Adriatic set that dreaded sea between them and their homes! Superstition, hand in hand with peril, barred their way, yet they broke through! But after what centuries of fearful longing curiosity and love of salt adventure struggling in their hearts with fear of the unknown, till courage gained the mastery and the galleys braved the surf and smoke of the *planctæ*, the rocks that struck together, "where not even do birds pass by, no, not the timorous doves which carry Am-

brosia for Zeus, but even of them the sheer rock ever steals one away, and the father sends in another to make up the number."

Then the rowers saw the rock of Scylla and her ravening heads thrust forth to prey on them, while beneath the fig tree on the opposite crag Charybdis sucked down the black seawater awfully, and cast it forth again in showers of foam and spray. These fabled dangers passed, there remained the Island of the Sirens, which legend placed near Capri, where Ulysses passed it when he sailed south again; and so the wonderful tradition of the sirens dominates the ancient traffic of mankind upon these waters, and the harbour where the shrine of Parthenope was reflected in the blue sea claims a lofty place in the realms whether of imagination or of that scholarship which cares rather for the deeds of men than for the verbal emendations of a text.

The shrine has gone. The memory remains only as a fable, whose dim meaning rests on the vast duration of the ages through which men have gone to and fro upon these waters. But here, still unchanged, is the

VIA PARTENOPE, FROM THE SEA.

pathway to the shrine—the Tyrrhene Sea, bearing still the selfsame aspect as in the days when the galleys of Æneas beat up the coast from Troy, and Palinurus watched the wind rise out of the blackening west. Since those old times the surface of the land has changed as often almost as the summer clouds have swept across it. Volcanic outbursts and the caprice of many masters have wrought together in destruction; so that he who now desires to see what Virgil saw must cheat his eyes at every moment and keep his imagination ever on the stretch. Even the city of mediæval days, the capital of Anjou and Aragon, is so far lost and hidden that a man must seek diligently before he cuts the network of old streets, unsavoury and crowded, in which he can discover the lanes and courtyards where Boccaccio sought Fiammetta, or the walls on which Giotto painted.

But here, upon the silent sea, at every moment fresh objects are coming into sight which have lain unchanged under dawn and dusk in every generation. Already the volcanic cone of Monte Epomeo towers out of Ischia, a menace of destruction which not

twenty years ago fulfilled itself and shook the town of Casamiciola in a few seconds into a mere rubble heap. It is a sad sight still to stroll round that once smiling town. Ruins project on every side. The cathedral lies shattered and untouched; there is not enough money in the island to rebuild it. The visitors, to whom most of the old prosperity was due, have not yet recovered from the attack of nerves brought on by the earthquake. But there remains wonderful beauty at Casamiciola and elsewhere on Ischia; the "Piccola Sentinella" is an excellent hotel; some day, surely, the lost ground will be recovered, and prosperity return.

The new town lies gleaming on the flat at the foot of the great mountain. Far away towards my right Capri, loveliest of islands, floats upon the sea touched with blue haze; and there, stretching landwards, is the mountain promontory of Sorrento, Monte St. Angelo towering over Monte Faito, and the whole mass dropping by swift, steep slopes to the Punta di Campanella, the headland of the bell, whence in the old days of Corsairs the warning toll swung out across the sea as

THE CASTLE OF ISCHIA.

often as the galleys of Dragut or of Barbarossa hove in sight, echoing from Torre del Greco, Torre Annunziata, and many another watch-tower of that fair and wealthy coast, while the artillery of the old castle of Ischia, answering with three shots, gave warning of the coming peril. Even now I can see that ancient castle, standing nobly on a rock that seems an island, though, in fact, it is united with the land by a low causeway; and it comes into my mind how Vittoria Colonna took refuge from her sorrows there, spending her widowhood behind the battlements on which she had played with her husband as a child. Doubtless the two children listened awestruck on many a day to the cannon-shots which warned the fishers. Perhaps Vittoria may even have been pacing there when, as Brantôme writes, a party of French knights of Malta came sailing by with much treasure on their ship, and hearing the three shots took them arrogantly for a salute in honour of their flag, and so, thinking of nothing but their dignity, made a courteous salute in answer, and kept on their way. Whereupon the spider Dragut, who at that moment was

sacking Castellammare, just where the peninsula joins the mainland, driving off as captive all those men or women who had not fled up into the wooded hills in time, swooped out with half a dozen galleys, and added the poor knights and their treasure to his piles of plunder.

Many tales are told about that castle, so near and safe a refuge from the turbulence of Naples. But already it is dropping astern, and the lower land of Procida usurps its place, an island which in the days of Juvenal was a byword of desolation, though populous and fertile in our own. The widening strait of water between the low shore and the craggy one played its part in a tale as passionate, though not so famous, as that of Hero and Leander. For Boccaccio tells us that Gianni di Procida, nephew and namesake of a man whose loyalty popular tradition will extol until the end of time, loved one Restituta Bolgaro, daughter of a gentleman of Ischia; and often when his love for her burnt so hotly that he could not sleep, used to rise and go down to the water, and if he found no boat would plunge into the black

sea, swim the channel, and lie beneath the walls of Restituta's house all night, swimming back happy in the morning if he had but seen the roof which sheltered her. But one day when Restituta was alone upon the shore she was carried off by pirates out of Sicily, who, wondering at her beauty, took her to Palermo and showed her to King Federigo, who straightway loved her, and gave her rooms in his palace, and waited till a day might come when she would love him. But Gianni armed a ship and followed swiftly on the traces of the captors, and found at last that Restituta was in Palermo. Then, led by love, he scaled the palace wall by night and crossed the garden in the dark and gained the poor girl's chamber, and might have borne her off in safety had not the King, suspecting that all was not well, come with torches in the darkness and discovered Gianni and cast him into prison, where he lay till he was sentenced to be taken out and burned at the stake in the Piazza of Palermo together with the girl who had dared to flout the affection of a king. And burned they would have been had not the great Admiral Rug-

giero di Loria chanced to pass that way as they stood together at the stake and known Gianni as the nephew of that great plotter who conceived the massacre of the Sicilian Vespers, whereby the crown of Sicily was set upon the head of Aragon. Straightway he hastened to the King, who forthwith released Gianni and gave him Restituta, and sent both home laden with rich gifts to Ischia, where they lived happy for many a year, till they were overcome at last by no worse fate than that which is reserved for all humanity whether glad or sorry.

No man can prove this story true; but it is at least so happily conceived as to be worth credence, like others told us by the same immortal writer, who, though a Florentine, knew Naples well, and doubtless wove into the *Decameron* many an anecdote picked up in the taverns which survives now in no other form. For there was no Brantôme to collect for us the gossip of the days when Anjou drove out Hohenstaufen from this kingdom; and if we would know what happened on the coast in those tragic and far-distant times we must take the tales set

down by Boccaccio for what they may be worth.

I am not sure that Gianni, the hot-passioned lad who used to swim this strait by night, does not emerge out of the darkness of the centuries more clearly than his greater uncle—that mighty plotter who, using craft and guile where he had no strength, is fabled to have built up a conspiracy and engineered a massacre which has no parallel save in the St. Bartholomew. Yet it is not to be judged without excuse like that foul act of cold-blooded treachery, but was in some measure an expiation of intolerable wrongs, as may be discovered even now by anyone who will study the plentiful traditions of that March night when eight thousand French of every age and either sex perished in two hours, slain at the signal of the vesper bell ringing in Palermo. That bloodshed split the kingdom of the two Sicilies in twain. It did more: it scored men's minds with a memory so deep that even now there is no child in Sicily who could not tell how the massacre began. To men then living it appeared a cataclysm so tremendous that they must

needs date time from it, as from the birth of Christ or the foundation of the world. In documents written full four centuries later the passage of the years is reckoned thus; and in Palermo to this day the nuns of the Pietà sing a litany on the Monday after Easter in memory of the souls of the French who perished on that night of woe. So memorable was the deed ascribed by tradition to the plotter, Giovanni di Procida, lord of that little island which is already slipping past me out of sight.

The steamer slips on noiselessly as ever. Procida falls away into the background, with its old brown town clinging to the seaward face of a precipitous cliff; and I can look down the Bay of Baiæ, where in old Roman days every woman who went in a Penelope came out a Helen, and almost catch a glance at Cumæ, where Dædalus put off his weary wings after that great flight from Crete which no man since has contrived to imitate. There lies the Gate of Hell down which Æneas plunged in company with the Sibyl; and round it all the land of the Phlegrean fields, heaving and steaming with volcanic

THE NATIONAL GARDEN, WITH THE TOMB OF VIRGIL.

fires. There too is the headland of Posilipo, where Virgil dwelt and where he wrought those enchantments concerning which I shall have much to say hereafter; for though Virgil is a poet to the world at large, he is a magician in the memory of the Neapolitans. And who shall say their tradition is not true?

Next, sweeping round towards my right hand in a perfect curve, comes the shore of the Riviera di Chiaia, once a pleasant sandy beach, broken midway by the jutting rock and island on which stood the church and monastery of San Lionardo. It is long since church and island disappeared, and few of those gay Neapolitans who throng the Via Caracciolo, that fine parade which now usurps the whole seafront from horn to horn of the bay, could even point out where it stood. In these days the whole shore is embowered in trees and gardens skirting the fine roadway; and there stands the wonderful aquarium, which has no equal in the world, and where the wise will spend many afternoons and yet leave its marvels unexhausted.

My eyes have travelled on to the other

horn of this fine bay, and are arrested by what is surely the most picturesque object in all Naples. For at this point the spine or backbone of land which breaks the present city into two, leaving on the right the ancient town and on the left the modern, built along the pretty shore of which I have just spoken, —at this point the ridge sweeps down precipitously from the Castle of St. Elmo on the height, breaks off abruptly in the sheer cliff of the Pizzo-Falcone, "The Falcon's Beak," and then sends jutting out into the sea a small craggy island which bears an old hoary castle low down by the water's edge. On this grey morning the sea breaks heavily about the black reef on which the castle stands, and the walls, darkened almost to the colour of the rock itself, assume a curious aspect of vast age, such as disposes one to seek within their girth for some at least among the secrets of old Naples. Nor will the search be vain; for this hoary fortress is Castel dell'Uovo, "The Castle of the Egg," so called, if we may lend an ear to Neapolitan tradition, because Virgil the Enchanter built it on an egg, on which it stands unto this

hour, and shall stand until the egg is broken. Others again say that the islet is egg-shaped, which it is not, unless my eyes deceive me; and of other explanations I know none at all, so that any man who can content himself with neither of these may resign himself to contemplate an unsolved puzzle for as long as he may stay in Naples.

Apart, however, from the wizard Virgil and the idle tale of the enchanted egg, there is something so arresting in the sight of this ancient castle thrust out into the sea that I cannot choose but see in it the heart of the interest of Naples. It is by far the oldest castle which Naples owns, and as its day came earliest so it passed the first. Castel Nuovo robbed it of its consequence, both as a royal dwelling and a place of arms; and now the noisy, feverish tide of life that beats so restlessly from east to west through the great city find scarce an echo on the silent battlements of the Egg Castle, where Norman monarchs met their barons and royal prisoners languished in the dungeons. Inside the walls there is nothing to attract a visitor but memories. Yet those gather

thick and fast as soon as one has crossed the drawbridge, and there is scarce one other spot in Naples where a man who cares for the past of the old tragic city can lose himself more easily in dreams.

But again the steamer turns her course a little, and suddenly the Castel dell'Uovo slips out of sight, the old brown city passes across my line of vision like a picture on the screen of a camera oscura when the lens is moved, and I am gazing out beyond the houses across the wide rich plain out of which the vast bulk of Vesuvius rears itself dark and tremendous, towering near the sea. There are other mountains far away, encircling the plain like the walls of some great amphitheatre, but they are beyond the range of volcanic catastrophe, and stood unmoved while the peaks of Vesuvius were piled up and blown away into a thousand shapes, sometimes green and fertile, the haunt of wild boars and grazing cattle, at others rent by fire and subterranean convulsion so as to give reality to the most awful visions which the imagination of mankind has conceived concerning the destruction which befell the sinful cities of the plain.

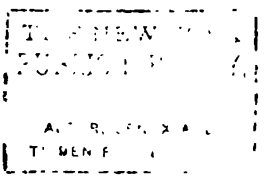
The plain is the Campagna Felice, a happy country, notwithstanding the perpetual menace of the smoking mountain, which time after time has convulsed the fields, altered the outline of the coast, and overwhelmed cities, villages, and churches. Throughout the last eighteen hundred years a destruction like to that which befell the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii has been overtaking hamlets and buildings of less note. The country is a palimpsest. What is now written on its surface is not a tithe of what was once inscribed there. In 1861 an earthquake at Torre del Greco made a fissure in the main street. Those who dared descend it found themselves in a church, long since buried and forgotten. So it is in every direction throughout the Campagna Felice. The works of man are overwhelmed in countless numbers by the ejections from Vesuvius, and the green fields of beans and lupins which stretch so pleasantly across the wide spaces between the Sarno and the Sebeto cover the ruins of innumerable homes.

It seems strange that a land exposed to such great and constant perils should be

densely populated. The coast is lined with towns, all shining in the sun, and the first graceful slopes of Vesuvius itself are studded with white buildings, planted here and there in apparent oblivion of the floods of red-hot lava which have so often forced their way down the inclines towards the sea. There must be many dwellers in those towns who saw the lava break out from new vents in 1861 among the cultivated fields. Yet the fields are cultivated still, and in time of eruption the peasants will continue working in the vineyards within a few hundred yards of the crawling stream, knowing well how often its progress is arrested by the cooling of the fiery mass. There is, moreover, the power of the saints to be considered. How often has not San Gennaro arrested the outbreaks, and brought peace to the frightened city! On the Ponte della Maddalena he stands unto this day, his outstretched arm, pointing to the mountain with a gesture drawn from the mimic language of the people, bids it "Halt!" And then the fertility of the volcanic soil! Vesuvius, if a rough friend, is a kindly one. He may drive the

CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEL CARMINE.

CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEL CARMINE



people to their prayers from time to time, which is no great harm! but, if a balance be struck, his benefits are as many as his injuries, and the peasants, looking up, as they hoe their fields, at the coiling wreaths of copper-coloured smoke which issue from the cone, are content to take their chance that death may some day meet them too in a cloud of scorching ashes as it did those who dwelt in Pompeii so very long ago.

The great steamer is already near her moorings. The western or newer half of Naples is hidden by the hill, and I have before my eyes only the densely peopled ancient city, a rabbit warren of tortuous and narrow streets, unsavoury and not too safe, yet full of interest if not of beauty, and possessing a picturesqueness which is all their own. One salient feature only arrests the eye wandering over this intricate mass of balconies and house-fronts—the handsome steeple of the Carmine, a church sorely injured and defaced, but still abounding in romance. For there lies the boy-king Conradin, slaughtered by Charles of Anjou in the market-place just outside; and there, too, the fisherman Mas-

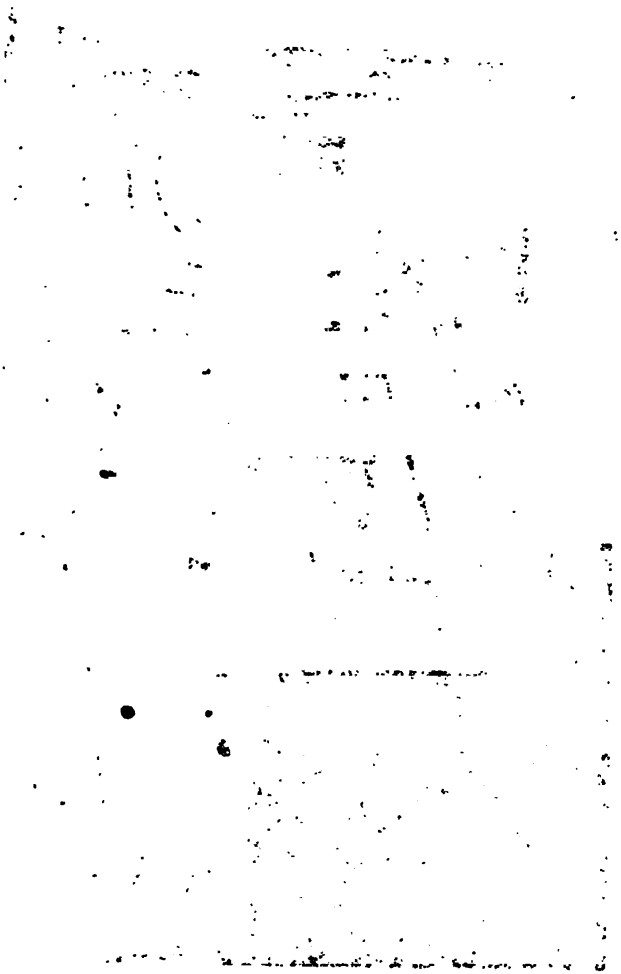
aniello met his end, after a trick of fortune had made him ruler of Naples for eight days. There is no church in all the city so full of tragedies as this, which was founded by hermits fleeing from Mount Carmel twelve hundred years ago, and which ever since has been close to the heart of the passionate and fierce-tempered people dwelling round its walls.

I do not doubt there was a time when travellers, arriving at Naples by sea, found themselves greeted by persons of aspect more pleasing than those who accost the astonished traveller of to-day. There was surely an age when the lazzaroni were really picturesque, when they lay on the warm sand in the sunshine, while the bay resounded with the chant of fishermen, the light-hearted people beguiling their unbounded leisure with the tuneful strains of "Drunghe, drunghete," of "Tiritomba," or even the too familiar "Santa Lucia." It cannot be that travellers lied when they wrote of the amazing picturesqueness of the Neapolitans, that they painted brown purple, and put on their spectacles of rose as they approached the land! I wish I had those spectacles; for indeed the aspect of

the quays and wharves of Naples is not attractive, while the people who throng the boats now pushing off towards the steamer are just such a crowd of expectant barterers as one may see wherever a great steamer touches. In the stern of the first stands a naked boy, brown and lithe. His accomplishment is to dive for pence, which he does with singular dexterity, cramming all the coins as he catches them into his mouth, which yet is not so full as to impede his bellowing like a bull in the effort to attract more custom. Did I complain of the lack of music? I was hasty; for there comes a second boat, carrying two nymphs whose devotion to the art has caused them to forget the use of water, unless it be internally. One has a hoarse voice, the other a shrill one; and with smiles and antics they pipe out the cheapest of modern melodies, chanting the eternal "Funicoli, Funicola," till one wishes the writer of that most paltry song could be keelhauled, or taught by some other process of similar asperity how grave is the offence of him who casts one more jingle into the hoarse throats of the street musicians of to-day. If I flee to

the further side of the steamer and stop my ears from the cacophony, my face is tickled by the foliage of huge nosegays thrust up on the ends of poles from a boat so low in the water that I cannot see it. The salt air grows heavy with the scent of violets and roses. None of my senses is at peace.

But in another hour the landing was happily accomplished. The recollection of the mob through which one struggled to the quay, the noise, the extortion, and the smells had faded away into the limbo of bad dreams, and I was free to go whither I would in the small portion of the day remaining and taste whichever sight of Naples pleased me first. There is nothing more bewildering to a stranger than to be turned loose in a great city with which he is imperfectly acquainted. I looked east towards the Carmine; but the handsome Campanile lay far from the centre of the city. I gazed before me, up a long straight street which cleft the older city with a course as straight as any bow shot, the house fronts intricate with countless balconies and climbing plants. It is the Strada del Duomo; but I knew it to be new through



CLOISTER OF MONASTERY OF SAN MARTINO.

CLOISTER OF MONASTERY OF SAN
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all its lower length, and it leads into the very heart of the dense old town, where, lost in a maze of Vicoli, I could never grasp the broad and general aspect of this metropolis of many kings.

At that moment I remembered the hill on which the Castle of St. Elmo stood; and turning westwards along the street which borders the quays, I came out in no great distance on the Piazza del Municipio, bordered on the further side by the walls and towers of Castel Nuovo, that old royal castle of Anjou and Aragon, which saw so many tragedies wrought within its walls, and holds some still, as I shall tell in time, for the better persuasion of any who may be disposed to set down the accusations of history as distant and vague charges, which cannot nowadays be brought to the test of sight. Before my eyes rises the white priory of San Martino topping the hillside high above the town, and it is to that point that I am hastening ere the gold light of the afternoon fades off the bay, and the grey shades of the early dusk rob the islands of their sunset colours. It is a long climb up to the belvedere of the

low white building. The Neapolitans believed in days not long distant that vast caverns of almost immeasurable extent branched out laterally from the dungeons of St. Elmo and ran down beneath the city even to Castel Nuovo, making a secret communication between the garrisons of the two fortresses on which the security of Naples most depended. The story is not true. The vaults of St. Elmo do not reach so far, and are not more extensive than the circuit of the castle. But indeed these hillsides on which Naples lies are pierced so frequently by caverns, so many tales are told of grottoes known and unknown in every spine of rock, that the wildest stories of mysterious passages have found ready credence; and there are doubtless many children, old and young, in Naples who believe that one may walk beneath the earth from St. Elmo to Castel Nuovo no less firmly than they credit the existence of vast caverns filled with gold and jewels lying underneath Castel dell'Uovo, guarded for ever from the sight of man by the chafing of the waves.

Naples presents us with a strange blend of romance and common sense—the modern

spirit, practical and useful, setting itself with something like the energy of the old Italian genius towards the gigantic task of acquiring the arts of government, and turning a people enslaved for centuries into one which can wield the hammer of its own great destinies. "L'Italia è fatta," said Massimo d'Azeglio, "ma chi fara ora gli Italiani?" It was the question of a patriot, and it may be that it is not wholly answered yet. The most careless of observers can see that some things still go wrong in Italy, that the Italians are not yet wholly made, and it is the easiest as it is the stupidest of tasks to demonstrate that thirty years of freedom have not taught the youngest nation what the oldest took eight centuries to learn. It galls me to hear the supercilious remarks dropped by strangers coming from a country where serious difficulties of government have not existed in the memory of man, the casual wisdom of critics who look around too carelessly to note the energy with which one by one the roots of evil are plucked up, and the refuse of the long tyranny cleared away. I am not writing a political tract; but I say once for all

that the recent history of Italy can show more triumphs than its failures; and the day will surely come when the indomitable courage of her rulers shall purge the country of those cankers which for centuries ate out her manhood.

"We do not serve the dead—the past is past.
God lives, and lifts his glorious mornings up
Before the eyes of men awake at last,
Who put away the meats they used to sup,
And down upon the dust of earth outcast
The dregs remaining of the ancient cup,
Then turn to wakeful prayer and worthy act."

Dear prophetess and poet, who once from Casa Guidi sang so bravely of the future, kindling the love of Italy in many a heart where it has since grown into a passion,—it is coming true! It may be that fulfilment loiters, but Heaven does not disappoint mankind of hopes so great as these. They are of the sort with which God keeps troth. The child who went by singing "O bella libertà, o bella!" does not flute so sweetly now he is a man, but his hands have taken hold, and his heart is set on the greatness of his motherland.

The sun lies thick and hot in the Toledo, that long and crowded street which is the

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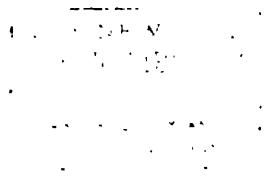

chief thoroughfare of Naples. It is hotter still when, having toiled as far as the museum, I turn off along the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, which winds along the hillside, giving at each turn grand views across the town and harbour towards Capri shining in the west. A little way down the Corso is a flight of steps, long, tortuous and steep, yet forming much the pleasantest approach to the white priory whither every visitor to Naples goes once at least towards the hour of sunset. As one mounts, the city drops away, and the long semicircle of hills behind it rises into sight, green rounded hills, bearing on their summit palms which stand out sharp and dark against the sky. With every convolution of the stairs one sees more and more of the great plain out of which Vesuvius rises, —the Campagna Felice, a purple flat, stretching from the base of the volcano as far as that mountain chain which marks the limit of its power. Out of the mountains comes a fresh cool wind, and all the city sparkles in the sun.

So I went up among the housetops till at length I reached an open space bounded by a

rampart whence one looked down upon the town. On the further side a gateway gave admission to a courtyard, and that again to a corridor of the old priory, through which a guide led me with vain pointings toward the chamber containing the "Presepe," a vast model of the scene of the Nativity. Mary sits upon a height under a fragment of an old Greek building; while all the valleys are filled with the procession of the kings. Their goods are being unloaded from the troops of asses which bore them. In the meadows sheep are grazing, cows are being milked; and the sky is filled with choirs of angels. It is an ingenious, theatrical toy, but not half so pretty as the sunset, which I came to see. So with some indignation of my guide, I pressed on through an exquisitely cool arcaded courtyard of white marble, its centre occupied by a garden wherein palms and roses grew almost profuse enough to hide the ancient draw well, with its chain and bucket lying as if they waited for some brother told off by the Prior to draw water for the rest. In one corner of this courtyard a doorway gives admission to the belvedere,

a little chamber with two windows, whereof one looks towards the plain behind Vesuvius, and the other gives upon Posilipo.

As I stepped out on the belvedere the sun was dropping fast towards Posilipo, and wide flashes of gold were spreading over all the cup-shaped bay. Far out at sea, between the two horns of the gulf, the dark peaks of Capri caught the light, and presently the glow blazed more brightly in the west, and all the shores where Sorrento lies began to quiver softly in the sunset. Vesuvius was grim and black; a pillar of dark smoke mounted slowly from its summit, and stretched across the paling sky like a banner floating defiantly from some tall citadel. Deep down beneath me lay the white city, a forest of domes and house-fronts which seemed at first impenetrable. But ere long the royal palace detached itself from the other buildings, and I could distinguish Castel Nuovo, with its old round towers, looking very dark and grim, while on the left a forest of domes and spires rose out of the densely crowded streets which have known so many masters and have allured conquerors

from lands so very far away. A faint brown haze crept down from the hilltops, the first touch of evening chilled the air, but the seaward sky was marvellously clear, and the wide bay gleamed with gold and purple lights.

CHAPTER II.

THE ANCIENT MARVELS OF THE PHLEGRÆAN FIELDS.

It is a morning of alternate sun and shadow. The clouds are flying low across the city, so that now one dome and now another flashes into light and the orange groves shine green and gold among the square white houses. All the high range of the Sorrento Mountains lies in shadow, but on the sea the colours are glowing warm and bright, here a tender blue, there deepening into grey, and again, nearer into shore, a marvellous rich tint which has no name, but is azure and emerald in a single moment. Away across the crescent of the gulf a crowd of fishing boats are putting forth from Torre del Greco or Torre dell' Annunziata. Even at this distance one can see how they set their huge triangular sails and scatter, some one way, some another, searching each perhaps for his

favourite volcanic shoal; for the largest fish lurk always in the hollows of those lava reefs which have from time to time burst out of the bottom of the bay. Some, perhaps, are sailing for the coral fishery upon the coast of Africa, to which great numbers go still in this month of April out of all the harbours beneath Vesuvius, though the profits are not what they were, and the trade is falling upon evil days. As for the mountain, he has cleared himself of clouds, and from his summit a heavy coil of smoke uncurls itself lazily and spreads like a pennant stretching far across the sky.

All these things and more I have time to notice while I trudge along above the housetops of the city, those flat roofs named *astrici* which are such pleasant lounges on the summer evenings when the blue bay is dotted over with white sails and the shadows deepen on the flanks of Vesuvius or the distant line of the Sorrento coast. At length the road approaching the ridge of hill whose point forms the headland of Posilipo drops swiftly, and I find myself in face of a short ascent leading to the mouth of the very ancient

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grotto by which, these two thousand years and more, those who fared from Naples unto Pozzuoli have saved themselves the trouble of the hill.

It is absolutely necessary to pause and consider this hill, to which so much of the rare beauty of Naples is to be attributed. For the moment I set aside its legends and traditions, and turn my attention to the eminence itself. It is a cliff of yellow rock, whose consistency somewhat resembles sandstone, evidently worked without much difficulty, since it has been quarried out into vast cavities. The rock is tufa. It is a volcanic product, and forms the staple not only of the headland, but also of all the site of Naples and the rising ground behind it up to the base of the blue Apennines, which are seen continually towering in the distance beyond Vesuvius.

Thus at Naples one may distinguish between the eternal hills and those which have no title to the name. Of the latter is Posilipo, formed as I said out of volcanic ash. That ash was ejected underneath the sea, and having been compacted into rock by the ac-

tion of the water was upreared by some convulsion long since forgotten. It is an intrusion on the landscape—a very ancient one, certainly—but it has nothing to do with the great mountain-chain which hems in the Neapolitan Campagna and ends at last in the Sorrento peninsula and Capri. All the most fertile plain which lies within that barrier was once beneath the sea, which flowed up to the bases of the mountains. There is no doubt about it. The rock of Posilipo contains shells of fish now living in the bay. From Gaeta to Castellammare stretched one wide inlet of the sea. But underneath the water volcanic ash was being cast out, as it is still at certain spots within the bay; the heaps of ash and pumice stone grew into shoals and reefs, were uplifted into hills, the sea flowed back from its uptilted bed, and the coasts of Naples and of Baiæ assumed some outline roughly similar to that which they possess at present.

Of course all this is very ancient history, far beyond the ken of written records, or even the faintest whisper of tradition, unless, indeed, in the awe with which ancient writers

alluded to the Phlegræan fields, fabled in old time to be the gate of hell, we may detect some lingering memory of the horrible convulsion which drove back the sea, and out of its deserted bed reared up this wilderness of ash and craters. But speculations of this kind are rather idle. We had better turn towards the grottoes, which are, at least in part, the work of men whose doings on this earth are known to history. The one, of course, is wholly modern, a construction of our own age for the accommodation of the steam tramway; but the other, through which one walks or drives, is certainly as old as the Emperor Augustus, and has sometimes been supposed to possess an antiquity far greater than that.

It seems remarkable that the Romans should have esteemed it easier to bore through the cliff than to make a road across the headland. Indeed, there were villas on Posilipo, and there must surely have been a road of some sort from very early times, though it must be admitted that the founders of Naples did not go to Pozzuoli by the coast as we do. The old road climbed up directly from the

city to Antignano, in the direction of Camaldoli, and kept along the ridge as far as possible. The coast road began to be used when the tunnel had been made. Still there must have been at least a track across the headland, and one wonders why the Romans did not improve it, in preference to boring underground. The ease with which the soft stone can be worked may account partially for their choice; but it is not to be forgotten that numberless caves, whether natural or artificial, exist in the cliffs at Posilipo, and Pizzofalcone, giving occasion to the quick fancy of the Neapolitans to devise wild tales of buried treasure and of strange fierce beasts which guard it from the greed of men. The old legends of the Cimmerians who dwelt in dark caverns of the Phlegræan fields present themselves to mind in this connection, and without following out this mysterious subject further into the mists which envelope it, we may recognise the possibility that some among these caverns are far older than is commonly believed. Of course the preference of the Romans for tunnelling is explained at once, if we may suppose that by enlarging existing

caverns they found their tunnel already partly made.

"I do not know," cries Capaccio, an ancient topographer who may yet be read with pleasure, though the grapes have ripened three hundred times above his tomb, "I do not know whether the Posilipo is more adorned by the grotto or the grotto by Posilipo." I really cannot guess what he meant. It sounds like the despairing observation of a writer at a loss for matter. We will leave him to resolve his own puzzle and go on through the darkness of the ill-lighted grotto —no pleasanter now than when Seneca grumbled at its dust and darkness—sparing some thought for that great festival which on the 7th of September every year turns this dark highway into a pandemonium of noise and riot. The festival of Piedigrotta is held as much within the tunnel as on the open space outside, where stands the church whose Madonna furnishes a devotional pretext for all the racket. Indeed it is almost more wild and whirling within than without; for one need not become a boy again to understand that the joys of rushing up and down,

wearing a fantastic paper cap, blowing shrieks upon a catcall, and brandishing a chinese lantern, must be infinitely greater in the bowels of the hill than in the open air. Of course it is not only, nor even chiefly, a feast for children. All the lower classes rejoice at Piedigrotta, and often with the best of cause; for it happens not infrequently that the sky, which for many weeks has been pitiless and brazen, clouds and breaks about that time, the welcome rain falls, the streets grow cool again, and laughter rises from end to end of the reviving city.

Of Fuorigrotta, the unpleasing village at the further end of the grotto, I have nothing to say, unless it be to express the wish that Giacomo Leopardi, who lies in the church of San Vitale, lay elsewhere. That superb poet and fine scholar whose verses upon Italy not yet reborn rank by their majesty and fire next after those of Dante, and who yet could produce a poem rendering so nobly the solitude of contemplation as that which commences—

"Che fai tu luna in ciel, dimmi, che fai,
Silenziosa luna!"

this man should have lain upon some mountain-top, among the scent of rosemary and of fragrant myrtle, rather than in such a reeking dirty village as Fuorigrotta.

But I forget!—the compelling interest of this day's journey is not literary. A short way from Fuorigrotta brings me to a point where the road turns slightly upward to the right, leading me to the brow of a hill, over which I look into a wooded hollow—none other than the Lago d'Agnano, once a crater, then a volcanic lake. Oddly enough, it is not mentioned as a lake by any ancient writer. Pliny describes the Grotta del Cane, which we are about to visit, but says not a word of any lake. This fact, with some others, suggests that the water appeared in this old crater only in the middle ages; though it really does not matter much, for it is gone now. The bottom has been reft from the fishes and converted into fertile soil. The sloping heights which wall the basin have a waste and somewhat blasted aspect; but I was not granted time to muse on these appearances before a smiling but determined brigand, belonging to the class of guides,

sauntered up with a small cur running at his heels, and made me aware that I had reached the entrance of the Dog Grotto.

I might have known it; for, in fact, through many centuries up to that recent year when it pleased the Italians to drain the lake, the life of the small dogs dwelling in this neighbourhood has been composed of progresses from grotto to lake and back again, first held up by the heels to be stifled by the poisonous gas, then soused head over ears in the lake, with instructions to recover quickly because another carriage was coming down the hill. Thus lake and grotto were twin branches of one establishment, now dissolved. Perhaps the lake was the more important of the two, since it is easier to stifle a dog or man than to revive him; and on many occasions there would have been melancholy accidents had not the cooling waters been at hand. For instance it is related by M. de Villamont, who came this way when the seventeenth century was very young indeed, that M. de Tournon, a few years before, desiring to carry off a bit of the roof of the grotto, was unhappily overcome by the fumes

as he stood chipping off the piece he fancied, and tumbled on the floor, as likely to perish as could be wished by the bitterest foe of those who spoil ancient monuments. His friends promptly dragged him out and tossed him into the lake. It is true the cure found so successful with dogs proved somewhat less so with M. de Tournon, for he died a few days later. Yet had the lake been dry, as it is to-day, he would have died in the cave, which would surely have been worse.

The little dog—he was hardly better than a puppy—looked at me and wagged his tail hopefully. I understood him perfectly. He had detected my nationality; and I resolved to be no less humane than a countrywoman of my own who visited this grotto no great while ago, and who, when asked by the brigand whether he should put the dog in, answered hastily "Certainly not." "Ah!" said the guide, "you are Englees! If you had been American you would have said, 'Why, certainly.'" I made the same condition. The fellow shrugged his shoulders. He did not care, he knew another way of extorting as many francs from me; and

accordingly we all went gaily down the hill, preceded by the happy cur, running on with tail erect, till we reached a gate in the wall through which we passed to the Grotta del Cane.

A low entrance, hardly more than a man's height, a long tubular passage of uniform dimensions sloping backwards into the bowels of the hill—such is all one sees on approaching the Dog Grotto. A misty exhalation rises from the floor and maintains its level while the ground slopes downwards. Thus, if a man entered, the whitish vapour would cling at first about his feet. A few steps further would bring it to his knees, then waist high, and in a little more it would rise about his mouth and nostrils and become a shroud indeed; for the gas is carbonic acid, and destroys all human life. King Charles the Eighth of France, who flashed across the sky of Naples as a conqueror, came here in the short space of time before he left it as a fugitive, bringing with him a donkey, on which he tried the effects of the gas. I do not know why he selected that animal; but the poor brute died. So did two slaves,

whom Don Pietro di Toledo, one of the early Spanish viceroys, used to decide the question whether any of the virtue had gone out of the gas. That question is settled more humanely now. The guide takes a torch, kindles it to a bright flame, and plunges it into the vapour. It goes out instantly; and when the act has been repeated some half dozen times the gas, impregnated with smoke, assumes the appearance of a silver sea, flowing in rippling waves against the black walls of the cavern.

With all its curiosity the Dog Grotto is a deadly little hole, in which the world takes much less interest nowadays than it does in many other objects in the neighbourhood of the Siren city, going indeed by preference to see those which are beautiful, whereas not many generations ago it rushed off hastily to see first those which are odd. For that reason many visitors to Naples neglect this region of the Phlegræan fields and are content to wait the natural occasion for visiting the mouth of Styx, over which all created beings must be ferried before they reach the nether world. It is a pity; for, judged from the point of

beauty solely, there is enough in the shore of the Bay of Baiæ to content most men. The road mounts upon the ridge which parts the slope of Lago d'Agnano from the sea. One looks down from the spine over a broken land of vineyards to a curved bay, an almost perfect semicircle, bounded on the left by the height of Posilipo, with the high crag of the Island of Nisida, and on the right by Capo Miseno, the point which took its name from the old Trojan trumpeter who made the long perilous voyage with Æneas, but perished as he reached the promised land where at last the wanderers were to find rest. The headland, which like every other eminence in sight, is purely volcanic, is a lofty mass of tufa, united with the land by a lower tongue, like a mere causeway; and on the nearer side stands the Castle of Baiæ, with the insignificant townlet which bears on its small shoulders the burden of so great a name. Midway in the bay the ancient town of Pozzuoli nestles by the water's edge, deserted this long while by all the trade which brought it into touch with Alexandria and many another city further east, filling its har-

bour with strange ships, crowding its quays with swarthy sailors, and with silks and spices of the Orient. All that old consequence has gone now like a dream, and no one visits the cluster of old brown houses for any other reason than to see that which is still left of its ancient greatness. But before going down the hill, I turn aside towards a gateway on my right, which admits me to a place of strange and curious interest. It is the Solfatara, and is nothing more or less than the crater of a half-extinct volcano, which, having lain torpid for full seven centuries is now a striking proof of the fertility of volcanic soil, and the speed with which nature will haste to spread her lushest vegetation even over a thin crust which covers seething fires. It was so once with the crater of Vesuvius, which, after five centuries of rest, filled itself with oaks and beeches, and covered its slopes with fresh grass up to the very summit.

Indeed, on entering the inclosure of the Solfatara, one receives the impression of treading the winding alleys of a well-kept and lovely park. The path runs through a

pretty wood. The trees are scarcely more important than a coppice; but under their green shade there grows a wealth of flowers of every colour, glowing in the soft sunshine which filters through the boughs. There is the white gum cistus, which is so strangely like the white wild rose of English hedges; and the branching asphodel; with myriads of those exquisite anemones, lilac and purple, which make the woods of Italy in springtime a perpetual joy to us who come from colder climates; and among these, a profusion of smaller blossoms trailing on the ground, crimson, white and orange, making such a mass of colour as the most cunning gardener would seek vainly to produce. One lingers and delays among these woods, doubting whether any sight which may be shown one further on can compensate for the loss of the cool glades.

But already over the green coppice bare, grey hillsides have come in sight. They are the walls of the old crater, and here and there a puff of white smoke curling out of a cleft reminds me that the flowers are only here on sufferance, and that the whole hollow is in

fact but waiting the moment when its hidden fires will break forth again, and vomit destruction over all the country. A few yards further on the coppice falls away. The flowers persist in carpeting the ground; but in a little way they too cease, the soil grows grey and blasted. Full in front there rises a strange scene of desolation. The wall of the crater is precipitous and black. At its base there are openings and piles of discoloured earth which suggest the débris of some factory of chemicals, an impression which is driven home by the yellow stains of sulphur which lie in every direction on the grey bottom of the crater.. From one vast rent in the soil a towering pillar of white smoke pours out with a loud hissing noise, and blows away in wreaths and coils over the dark surface of the cliff.

There is something curiously arresting in this quick passage from a green glade carpeted with flowers to the calcined ash and the grey desolation of this broken hillside. Of vegetation there is almost none except a stunted heather which creeps hardily towards the blast hole. A little way off, towards

the right, lies a level space sunk beneath the surrounding land, not unlike the fashion of an asphalt skating rink, so even in its surface that it resembles the work of man, and one strolls towards it to discover with what purpose anyone had dared to tamper with the soil in a spot where so thin a crust lies over bottomless pits of fire. But when one steps out upon the level flat, it reveals itself at once to be no human work. The guide stamps with his foot, and remarks that the sound is hollow. It is indeed, most unpleasantly so. He jumps upon it, and the surface quivers. You beg him to spare you further demonstrations, and walking gingerly on tiptoe, wishing at each step that you were safe in Regent Street once more, you follow him out towards the middle of this devilish crust, which rocks so easily and covers something which you hope devoutly you may never see. Midway in the expanse the fellow pauses in triumph—he has reached what he is confident will please you. He is standing by a hole, just such an opening as is made in a frozen lake in winter for the watering of animals. From it there emerges a little

vapour and a curious low sound, like that which a child will make with pouting lips. The guide grins, crouching by the opening; you, on the other hand, hang back, in doubt whether the crust may not break off and suddenly enlarge the hole. You are encouraged forwards, and at last, peering nervously down the hole, you see with keen and lively interest that the crust appeared to have about the thickness of your walking stick, at which depth there is a lake of boiling mud. The grey mud stirs and seethes in the round vent-hole, rising and falling, while on its surface the gas collects slowly into a huge bubble, which forms and bursts and then collects again.

For my part I do not deny that the sight fascinated me, but it deprived me of all wish to tread further on that shaking crust, and I sped back as lightly as I might, wishing all the way for wings, to where there was at least sound, green earth for a footing, in place of pumice stone and hardened mud, which some day, surely, will fly into splinters, and leave the seething, steaming lake once more open to the heavens.

From the hillside just beyond the gate of the Solfatara one gazes down on the town of Pozzuoli, brown and ancient, looking, I do not doubt, much the same unto this hour as when the Apostle Paul landed there from the *Castor and Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the Island of Melita. But if the town itself, the very houses clustered on the hill, preserve the aspect which they bore twenty centuries ago, so much cannot be said for the sea-front, which is vastly changed. Pozzuoli in those days must have rung with the noise of ships entering or departing. Its quays were clamorous with all the speeches of the East; its great trade in corn needed long warehouses near the water's edge; its amphitheatre was built for the games of a people numbering many thousands. But now the little boats which come and go are too few to break the long silence of the city, and there are scarce any other noises in the place than the shout of children at their games, or the loud crack of the vetturino's whip as the strangers rattle through the streets on their way to Baiæ.

It was the fall of Capua which made the

trade of Pozzuoli, and it was the rise of Ostia that destroyed it. Capua, long the first town of Italy by reason of its commerce and its luxury, lost that pre-eminence in the year 211 B. C., when the Romans avenged the adhesion of the city to the cause of Hannibal. That act of punishment made Rome the chief mart of merchants from the East, and the nearest port to the Eternal City being Pozzuoli, the trade flowed thither naturally. Naples no doubt had a finer harbour; but Naples was not in Roman hands, while Pozzuoli was. Ostia, before the days of the Emperor Claudius, who carried out great works there, was a port of smallest consequence. Thus the harbour of Pozzuoli was continually full of ships. They came from Spain, from Sardinia, from Elba, bringing iron, which was wrought into fine tools by cunning workmen of the town; from Africa, from Cyprus, and all the trading ports of Asia Minor and the isles of the Ægean. Thither came also the merchants of Phœnicia, bringing with them all those gorgeous wares which moved the prophet Ezekiel to utter so great a chant of glory and its doom. "Tar-

shish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead they traded in thy fairs. . . . These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes and broidered work and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords and made of cedar among thy merchandise. The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market. Thou wast replenished and made very glorious in the midst of the seas." All that most noble description of the commerce of Tyre returns irresistibly upon the mind when one looks back on the greatness of Pozzuoli, where the Tyrians themselves had a mighty factory and all the nations of the East brought their wares for sale. Most of all the town rejoiced when the great fleet hove in sight which came each year from Egypt in the spring. Seneca has left us a description of the stir. The fleet of traders was preceded some way in advance by light, swift sailing ships which heralded its coming. They could be known a long way off, for they sailed through the narrow strait between Capri and the mainland with topsails flying, a privilege allowed to none

but ships of Alexandria. Then all the town made ready to hasten to the water's edge, to watch the sailors dancing on the quays, or to gloat over the wonders which had travelled thither from Arabia, India, and perhaps even far Cathay.

Well, all this is an old story now—too old, perhaps, to be of any striking interest—yet here upon the shore is still the vast old Temple of Serapis, the Egyptian goddess whom the strangers worshipped. One knows not by what slow stages the Egyptians departed and the ancient temple was deserted. The only certain fact is that at some period the whole inclosure was buried deep beneath the sea, and after long centuries raised up again by some fresh movement of the swaying shore.

Strange as this seems to those who have not watched the perpetual heavings and subsidences of a volcanic land, the testimony of the fact is unmistakably in sight of all. For the sacred inclosure once hallowed to the rite of Serapis is still not allotted to any other purpose; and the visitor who enters it finds many of the ancient columns still erect. It

is a vast quadrangle, once paved with squares of marble. There was a covered peristyle, and in the centre another smaller temple. Many of the columns of fine marble which once adorned the abode of the goddess were reft from her in the last century, when the spot was cleared of all the soil and brush-wood which had grown up about it; but three huge pillars of cipollino, once forming part of the pronaos, are still erect, and what is singular about them is that, beginning at a height of some twelve feet from the ground and extending some nine feet further up, the marble is honey-combed with holes, drilled in countless numbers deep into the round surface of the columns.

There is no animal in earth or air which will attack stone in this destructive manner; but in the sea there is a little bivalve, called by naturalists "lithodomus," whose only happiness lies in boring. This animal is still found plentifully in the Bay of Baiæ. His shells still lie in the perforations of the columns; and it is thus demonstrated that the ancient temple must have been plunged beneath the sea, that it lay there long ages, till

at length some fresh convulsion reared it up once more out of the reach of fish. Surely few buildings have sustained so strange a fate!

The holes drilled by the patient lithodomus, as I have said, do not extend through the whole height of the column, but have a range of about nine feet only, which is thus the measure of the space left for the operations of the busy spoiler. Above the ring of perforations one sees the indications of ordinary weathering, so that the upper edge of the holes doubtless marks the level of high water, and the summit of the columns stood up above the waves. But one does not see readily what protected the lower portion of the marble. Possibly, before the land swayed downwards something fell which covered them.

In the twelfth century the Solfatara broke forth into eruption for the last time. The scoriæ and stones fell thick in Pozzuoli, and they filled the court of the Serapeon to the height of some twelve feet. Probably the sea had then already stolen into the court-yard; and it may be that the earthquakes

attending the eruption caused the subsidence which left the lithodomus free to crawl and bore upon the stones which saw the ancient mysteries of Serapis. At any rate it was another volcanic outburst which raised the dripping columns from the sea in 1538, since which time the land has been swaying slowly down once more, so that now if anyone cares to scratch the gravel in the courtyard he will find he has constructed a pool of clear sea water.

It is a strange and terrible thing to realise the existence of hidden forces which can sway the solid earth as lightly as a puff of wind disturbs an awning; none the less terrible because the ground has risen and fallen so very gently that the pillars stand erect upon their bases. Once more, as at the Solfatara, one has the sense of treading over some vast chasm filled with a sleeping power which may awake at any moment. Let us go on beyond the city and see what has happened elsewhere upon this bay, so beautiful and yet so deadly, a strange dwelling-place for men who have but one life to pass on the surface of this earth.

In passing out of Pozzuoli one sees upon the right the vine-clad slopes of Monte Barbaro. That also is a crater, the loftiest in the Phlegræan fields, but long at rest. The peasants believe the mountain to contain vast treasures—statues of kings and queens, all cast of solid gold, with heaps of coin and jewels so immense that great ships would be needed to carry them away. These tales are very old. I sometimes wonder whether they may not have had their source in dim memory of the great hoard of treasure which the Goths stored in the citadel of Cumæ, and which, when their power was utterly broken, they were supposed to have surrendered to the imperial general Narses. Perhaps they did not; perhaps——but what is the use of suppositions? Petrarch heard the stories when he climbed Monte Barbaro in 1343. Many men, his guides told him, had set out to seek the treasure, but had not returned, lost in some horrible abyss in the heart of the mountain. They must have neglected the conditions of success. They should have watched the moon, and learnt how to catch and prison down the ghosts which guard the

precious heaps, otherwise the whole mass, even if found, will turn to lumps of coal!

What a wilderness of craters! Small wonder if wild tales exist yet in a district which in old days, and even modern ones, has been encompassed with fear. One volcano is enough to fill the country east of Naples with terror. But here are many—active, doubtless, in very different ages—Monte Barbaro, Monte Cigliano, Monte Campana, Monte Grillo, which hems in the more recent crater of Avernus much as Somma encircles the eruptive crater of Vesuvius. What terrible sights must have been witnessed here in those far-distant days when these and other craters were in action!—"affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created" until then! But a few miles away across the sea is Monte Epomeo, towering out of Ischia. That was the chief vent of the volcanic forces in Roman times; and then the Phlegræan fields were still. Epomeo has been silent for five centuries; but that proves nothing, and there are people who suggest that the awful earthquake which

destroyed Casamicciola may be just such a prelude to the awakening of Epomeo as was the convulsion which shook Pompeii to its foundations sixteen years before its final destruction. *Di avertite omen!*

We need not, however, go back five centuries for facts that bid men heed what may be passing underground about the shores of this blue bay. Here is one too large to be overlooked, immediately in front of us—no other than the green slope of Monte Nuovo, a hill of aspect both innocent and ancient, ridged with a few pine trees by whose aid the mountain contrives to look as if it had stood there beside the Lucrine Lake as long as any eminence in sight. This is a false pretension. There was no such mountain when Petrarch climbed the neighbouring height, nor for full two centuries afterwards. What Petrarch saw exists no longer. He looked down upon the Lucrine Lake connected with the sea by a deep channel, and formed with Lake Avernus into one wide inlet fit for shipping. This was the Portus Julius, a harbour so large that the whole Roman fleet could manœuvre in it. The

canals and piers were in existence less than four centuries ago; and this great work, so remarkable a witness to the sea power of the Romans, would doubtless have lasted unto our day had it not been for the intrusion of Monte Nuovo, which destroyed the channels and reduced the Lucrine Lake to the dimensions of a sedgy duck pond.

The catastrophe is worth describing, for no other in historic times has so greatly changed the aspect of this coast or robbed it of so great a portion of its beauty. For full two years there had been constant earthquakes throughout Campania. Some imprisoned force was heaving and struggling to release itself, and all men began to fear a great convulsion. On the 27th of September, 1538, the earth tremors seemed to concentrate themselves around the town of Pozzuoli. More than twenty shots struck the town in rapid succession. By noon upon the 28th the sea was retreating visibly from the pleasant shore beside the Lucrine Lake, where stood the ruined villa of the Empress Agrippina, and a more modern villa of the Anjou kings, who were used, like all their predeces-

sors in Campania, to take their ease in summer among the luxuriant vegetation of the hills whose volcanic forces were believed to be lulled in a perpetual sleep.

For three hundred yards the sea fell back, its bottom was exposed, and the peasants came with carts and carried off the fish left dry upon the strand. The whole of the flat ground between Lake Avernus and the sea had been heaved upwards; but at eight o'clock on the following morning it began to sink again, though not as yet with any violence. It fell apparently at one spot only, and to a depth of about thirteen feet, while from the hollow thus formed there burst out a stream of very cold water, which was investigated cautiously by several persons, some of whom found it by no means cold, but tepid and sulphurous. Ere long those who were examining the new spring perceived that the sunken ground was rising awfully. It was upreared so rapidly that by noon the hollow had become a hill, and as the new slopes swelled and rose where never yet had there been a rising ground, the crest burst and fire broke out from the summit.

"About this time," says one Francesco del Nero, who dwelt at Pozzuoli, "about this time fire issued forth and formed the great gulf with such a force, noise, and shining light that I, who was standing in my garden, was seized with great terror. Forty minutes afterwards, though unwell, I got upon a neighbouring height, and by my troth it was a splendid fire, that threw up for a long time much earth and many stones. They fell back again all round the gulf, so that towards the sea they formed a heap in the shape of a crossbow, the bow being a mile and a half and the arrow two-thirds of a mile in dimensions. Towards Pozzuoli it has formed a hill nearly of the height of Monte Morello, and for a distance of seventy miles the earth and trees are covered with ashes. On my own estate I have neither a leaf on the trees nor a blade of grass. . . . The ashes that fell were soft, sulphurous, and heavy. They not only threw down the trees, but an immense number of birds, hares, and other animals were killed."

Amid such throes and pangs Monte Nuovo was born, and the events of that natal day

suggest hesitation before we label any crater of the Phlegræan fields with the word "extinct." It is granted that in the course of geologic ages volcanic forces do expend themselves. The British Isles, for instance, contain many dead volcanoes, once at least as formidable as any in the world. But the exhaustion has been the work of countless ages, and many generations of mankind will come and go upon this planet before the coasts of Baiæ and Misenum are as safe as those of Cumberland.

While speaking of these terrors, I have been halting by the wayside at a point, not far beyond the outskirts of Pozzuoli, where two roads unite, the one going inland beneath the slope of Monte Barbaro, the other following the outline of the curved shore on which Baiæ stands. The inland road is the one which goes to Cumæ, and is entitled to respect, if not to veneration, as being among the oldest of Italian highways, the approach to the most ancient Greek settlement in Italy, mother city of Pozzuoli and of Naples, not to mention the mysterious Palæopolis, whose very existence has been disputed by some

scholars. Some say it was more than ten centuries before Christ's birth that the bold Greeks of Eubœa came up this coast, where already their kinsmen were known as traders, and having settled first on Ischia moved to the opposite mainland, and built their acropolis upon a crag of trachyte which overhung the sea. Their life was a long warfare. More than once they owed salvation to the aid of their kinsmen from Sicilian cities, yet they made their foundation a mighty power in Italy. With one hand they held back the fierce Samnite mountaineers who coveted their wealth, and gave out with the other more and more freely that noble culture which has had no rival yet.

One must wonder why these strangers coming from the south passed by so many gulfs and harbours shaped out of the enduring rock only to choose a site for their new city at the foot of all these craters. It may be that chance had its part in the matter; in some slight indication of wind or wave they may have seen the guidance of a deity. Indeed, an ancient legend says their ships were guided by Apollo, who sent a dove flying

over sea to lead them. But again, the fires of the district were sacred in their eyes. The subterranean gods were near at hand, and on the dark shore of Lake Avernus they recognised the path by which Ulysses sought the shades. The mysteries of religion drew them there, and the cave of the Cumæan sibyl became the most venerated shrine in Italy. Lastly, one may perceive that the volcanic tract, full of terrors for the Etruscan or Samnite mountaineer who looked down upon its fires from afar, must have made attack difficult from the land.

Greek cities, such as Cumæ, studded the coast of southern Italy. "Magna Græcia" they called the country; and Greek it was, in blood, in art, and language. How powerful and how rich is better understood at Pæstum than it can be now at Cumæ, where, with the single exception of the Arco Felice, there remains no dignity of ruin, nothing but waste, crumbling fragments, half buried in the turf of vineyards. Such shattered scraps of masonry may aid a skilful archæologist to imagine what the city was; but in the path of untrained men they are nothing but a

hindrance, and anyone who has already in his mind a picture of the greatness of Eubœan Cumæ had better leave it there without attempt to verify its accuracy on the spot.

Observations similar to these apply justly to most of the remaining sights in this much-vaunted district. The guides are perfectly untrustworthy. They give high-sounding names to every broken wall, and there is not a burrow in the ground which they cannot connect with some name that has rung round the world. It is absolutely futile to hope to recapture the magic with which Virgil clothed this country. The cave of the Sibyl under the Acropolis of Cumæ was destroyed by the imperial general Narses when he besieged the Goths. The dark, wet passage on the shore of Lake Avernus, to which the name of the sibyl is given by the guides, is probably part of an old subterranean road, not devoid of interest, but is certainly not worth the discomfort of a visit. The Lake of Avernus has lost its terrors. It is no longer dark and menacing, and anyone may satisfy himself by a cursory inspection that birds by no means shun it now.

The truth is that this region compares ill in attractions with that upon the other side of Naples. In days not far distant, when brigands still invested all the roads and by-ways of the Sorrento peninsula, strangers found upon the Bay of Baiæ almost the only excursion which they could make in safety; and imbued as every traveller was with classical tradition, they still discovered on this shore that fabled beauty which it may once have possessed. There is now little to suggest the aspect of the coast when Roman fashion turned it into the most voluptuous abode of pleasure known in any age, and when the shore was fringed with marble palaces whose immense beauty is certainly not to be imagined by contemplating any one of the fragments that stud the hillside, though it may perhaps be realised in some dim way by anyone who will stand within the atrium of some great house at Pompeii, say the house of Pansa, who will note the splendour of the vista through the colonnaded peristyle, and will then remember that the Pompeiian houses were not famed for beauty, while the palaces of Baiæ were.

Baiæ, like Cumæ, is lost beyond recall. Fairyland is shattered into fragments; and the guides who baptise them with ridiculous names know no more than any one of us what it is they say. Really, since the tragedy of that first great outbreak of Vesuvius did, as Goethe said, create more pleasure for posterity than any other which has struck mankind, one is disposed to wish that it had been more widespread. If only the ashes had rained down a trifle harder at Misenum and at Baiæ, what noble Roman buildings might have survived unto this day, conserved by the kind wisdom of the mountain! What matter if more of that generation had been left houseless? It nearly happened, if Pliny's letter is not exaggerated. "The ashes now began to fall on us," he says, of his escape with his mother from the palace at Misenum, "though in no great quantity. I turned my head, and observed behind us a thick smoke which came rolling after us like a torrent. We had scarce stepped out of the path when darkness overspread us, not like the darkness of a cloudy night, nor that when there is no moon, but that of a closed room when all the lights

are out. Nothing was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the cries of men, some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices. . . . At length a glimmering light appeared, which we imagined to be rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames, as in truth it was, than the return of day. However, the fire fell at some distance from us. Then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a heavy shower of ashes rained upon us, which we were obliged every now and then to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in the heap. . . ." It is an awful tale. Anyone can see how nearly all this region escaped the fate of Pompeii, and how narrowly the modern world lost a greater joy than that of contemplating Pompeii.

However, it did not happen so, and there is comparatively little satisfaction in describing all the melancholy scraps of what was marvellously beautiful. I have nothing to say about them which is not said as fully in the guide-books. There is, however, some-

thing which more piques my interest in the narrow tongue of land parting the Lucrine Lake from the sea. There is, or was, a causeway here so ancient that even the Greeks, who settled at Cumæ so many centuries before our era, did not know who built it; and being in the dark about the matter, put down the construction to no less a person than the god Hercules, who made it, they declared, for the passage of the oxen, which he had taken from Geryon, the monster whom he slew in Gades. It was no small work, even for Hercules. The dam was eight stadia long, nearly a mile, made of large stone slabs laid with such skill that they withstood the sea for many centuries. Who could have been the builders of this dam in days so ancient that even the Greek settlers did not know its origin? Rome was not in those days. There were factories and traders on the coast,—Phœnicians perhaps. But why guess about a question so impossible to solve? The curiosity of the thing is worth noting; for the age of civilisation on these coasts is very great.

At this spot beside the Lucrine Lake,

where the sea is lapping slowly, almost stealthily, on the one hand, and the diminished waters of the lake lie still and reedy on the other, one memory, more than any other, haunts my mind. It cannot have been far from this very spot, certainly in sight of it, that there stood in old Roman days the villa of the Empress Agrippina, mother of the Emperor Nero, and it was at Baiæ, lying just across the blue curved bay, that he planned her murder, as soon as he discovered that she loved power, like himself, and stood in the way of certain schemes on which he set great store.

The fleet which lay at Capo Miseno, the great naval station of those days, was commanded by one Anicetus, a freedman, who, being of an ingenious mechanical turn of mind, devised a ship of a sort likely to prove useful to any tyrant anxious to speed his friends into the nether world without suspicion. It had much the same aspect as other ships when viewed from without; but a careful observer of its inward parts might notice that the usual tight boltings were replaced by movable ones, which could be shot back

at will, so that on a given signal the whole ship would fall to pieces. This pretty toy was of course not designed to make long voyages—it was enough if it would reach deep water.

Nero was delighted. He saw now how to avoid all scandal. The Empress was at that moment on the sea, homeward bound from Antium, and designed to land at Bauli, which lay near Baiæ on the bay. The ship was prepared, the bolts were shot, and the pretty pinnace lay waiting on the beach at Bauli when the Empress disembarked. And there too was Nero, come from Baiæ on purpose to pay duty to his mother and invite her to spend the Feast of Minerva with him at Baiæ, whither he hoped she would cross over in the boat which he had had the pleasure of fitting up with the splendour which was proper to her rank.

Agrippina knew her son, and was suspicious. She would go to Baiæ, but preferred to follow the road in a litter. That night, however, when the festivities at Baiæ was over, her fears vanished. Nero had been affectionate and dutiful. He had assured

her of his love. It would be churlish to refuse to enter the boat which he had fitted out for her, and which having been brought over from Bauli now lay waiting for her on the sands. It was a bright night, brilliant with stars. The bay must have looked incomparably peaceful and lovely. On the shore were crowds of bathers, all the fashionable world of Rome, drawn thither by the presence of the Emperor, and attracted out by the beauty of the night. At such a time and place nothing surely could be planned against her. She went on board with her attendants. The rowers put off from land. They had gone but a little way when the canopy under which Agrippina lay crashed down on her and killed one of her waiting women. A moment's examination showed that it had been weighted with pigs of lead. Almost at the same moment the murderers on board withdrew the bolts. The machinery, however, refused to act. The planks still held together; and the sailors, despairing of their bloodmoney, rushed to the side of the ship and tried to capsize it. They succeeded so far as to throw the Empress

and her attendants into the sea. Agrippina retained sufficient presence of mind to lie silent on the water, supporting herself as best she could, while the sailors thrashed the sea with oars, hoping thus to make an end of their victim, and one poor girl who thought to save herself by crying out that she was the Empress had her brains beaten out for her pains. At last the shore boats, whose owners could not know that they were interrupting the Emperor's dearest wish, arrived upon the scene, picked up the Empress, and carried her to her villa on this Lucrine lake.

It would have been wiser to flee to a greater distance, if indeed there was safety in any Roman territory for the mother of the Emperor when he desired to slay her. That night, as she lay bruised and weak, deserted by her attendants, a band of murderers rushed in, headed by Anicetus, who thus redeemed his credit with his master when his more ingenious scheme had failed. "Strike the womb that bore this monster!" cried the Empress, and so died.

"Then," says Merivale, from whose most

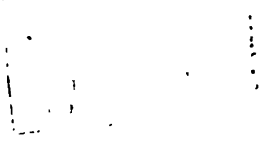
vivid story this is but an outline, "began the torments which never ceased to gnaw the heart strings of the matricide. Agrippina's spectre flitted before him. . . . The trumpet heard at her midnight obsequies still blared with ghostly music from the hill of Misenum."

CHAPTER III.

THE BEAUTIES AND TRADITIONS OF THE POSILIPO WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON VIRGIL THE ENCHANTER.

It was setting towards evening when I turned my back on Baiæ and drove through Pozzuoli along the dusty road which runs beside the sea in the direction of Posilipo. All day I had seen the blunt headland of tufa lying like a cloud on the further side of the blue bay; and from hour to hour as I plodded through the blasted country, my thoughts turned pleasantly to the great rampart which stood solid when all the region further west was shaken like a cornfield by the wind, and beyond which lies the city, with its endless human tragedies and its fatal beauty unimpaired by the possession of many masters. "Bocca baciata non perde ventura . . . ," the scandalous old proverb, has a sweet application to the city, and the

THE ISLAND OF NISIDA.



FESTIVAL OF PIEDIGROTTA.

mouth which has been kissed by conquerors and tyrants is still as fresh and rosy as when first uplifted for the delight of man.

I think this angle of the bay more beautiful than Baiæ or Misenum. In Roman times the opposite shore may have excelled it; but one does not know the precise form of the ancient coastline. As I advanced towards the headland, leaving behind the bathing-place of Bagnoli, and passing out on the wide green flats which at that point occupy the valley mouth, the lofty crag of Nisida began to detach itself from the mainland, and a channel of blue sea shining between the two glowed sweetly in the increasing warmth of evening light. The island is a crater, a finely broken mass of volcanic rock and verdure, flecked here with light and there with shadow. One side of the crater lacks half of its rim, so that there is a little port. Down by the edge of the many-coloured water is a pier, where half a dozen boats lie rocking; and from a similar landing-place upon the shingly beach of the mainland a fisherman is hailing some comrades on the island. The answering shout floats back faint and distant

through the clear air, and a boat pushes off, sculled slowly by a man standing erect and facing towards the bow, in the ancient fashion of the Mediterranean. At this point I dismiss my carriage, for I have many things to think about, and do not want the company of the chattering, extortionate vetturino. Having seen him go off up the hill, cracking his whip like pistol shots, and urging on his eager pony in the full hope of a fare at the Punta di Posilipo, I stroll towards the long ascent towards the shoulder of the hill, stopping often to watch the gold light grow warmer on the sea, tinging the volcanic crags of Ischia, until my enjoyment of the view is broken by an uninvited companion, who thrusts himself upon me with a reminder that I have reached the opening of the Grotto of Sejanus.

I had forgotton all about the grotto, though indeed it was the point for which I should have made, and but for the interruption of the lively little Tuscan who acts as custodian, I might have walked by without going in. I accepted gratefully the voluble assurances that this is indeed the most

wonderful and authentic grotto on the Posilipo, far surpassing those twin tunnels through which one goes from Naples to Pozzuoli; and the guide, having caught up a torch of smouldering tow, and vented a few hearty curses on the Neapolitans, who lie, he says, without recollection of eternity, conducted me into a long passage of utter and palpable darkness.

"Nè femmena nè tela a lume di cannela," say the Neapolitans—You must not judge either a woman or a weft by candlelight. This is very true, and many a man has suffered from forgetting it. But when it is a case of grottoes, there is no choice; and accordingly I delivered myself over to the chatter of the Tuscan.

The lively little man was extolling the superior character of his own countrymen of Tuscany; and when his torch flickered out with no warning, leaving us in sudden blackness in the bowels of the earth, his indignation blazed out fiercely against the worthless knaves who sold such tow in Naples. I paid little heed to him, for the grandeur and the silence of the place appeal to the imagination.

I was treading on a smooth and even floor, between walls of tufa which had been chiselled out so straight that whenever I looked back the entrance shone behind me like a star across a vast dark sky. The air was sweet and fresh, filtering through some hidden openings of the rock. The relighted torch flashed now on Roman brickwork, now on arches of massive stone built to increase the strength of the vault, and fit it the better for those great processions of chariots and horsemen which came and went to the villa at the further end, returning from a hunting party with dogs which had wearied out the game on the hills of Astroni, or escorting the gladiators landed at Pozzuoli for some combat in the theatre which now lies so waste and desolate amid the vineyards. How this passage must have rung with shouts and laughter in old Roman days! But now it is as silent as the tomb; and one passes on a full half-mile in darkness, to emerge at length with heated fancy and high memories of Roman splendour, on nothing but a ruinous cottage, a starved vineyard, and a paltry garden-ground of common vegetables!

It is not possible, one thinks impatiently, that this trumpery of vines and cabbages can be all there is to see at the further end of a passage so ancient and hewn with such vast labour through the solid rock; and indeed, when one's eyes are used to the sunshine, one perceives that the garden plot lies like a dust heap on the ruins of a splendid palace. Treading across a patch of vegetables, covering I know not what remains of marble portico or colonnade, I peered down through the trails of budding vines into a hollow where some fragments of old masonry project still from the earth, and after much gazing perceived that the sides of the hollow rise in tiers, one bank above another, to the height of seventeen rows. So that here, on this now lonely creek of the Posilipo, in face of Nisida and all the blue reach of the Bay of Baiæ, there was once a theatre, ringing with shouts and applause, and by it all the other buildings of a noble mansion. It is a poor ruin now, stripped of the marbles which once made it splendid. There are vast structures on the slopes and in the sea itself: an Odeon, another building seated like a theatre,

and relics innumerable of one of the greatest of all Roman villas, which must have been incomparably lovely. If only one such might have lasted to our day!

The long darkness of the grotto, the exit on the hillside, where the ancient splendour is so shattered, combine to create a sense of mystery which one never loses on the Posilipo. The sea frets and chafes about the jagged reefs at the base of the headland, echoing and resounding in caves of vast antiquity, where broken marbles and defaced inscriptions give substance to the tales of treasure which the fishers say lies hidden in them to this hour. The dullest of mankind would be smitten with some touch of fancy on this spot, much more the quick-witted Neapolitans, whose rich imagination has run riot among the relics of a splendid past.

The impression of this lonely cliff is characteristic of all the headland. I send away my guide, who can do nothing more for me, and perch myself upon a scrap of ancient wall, whence I can look past the green island of Nisida, full in the warm light of the westering sun, over the wide bay to where the

black peak of Ischia, towering into the clear sky, begins to shine as if some goddess had brushed it with liquid gold.

There is a cavern in the cliff at no great distance which the fishermen call "La Grotta dei Tuoni" (The Cave of Thunder); I scarcely know why, unless it be because the sea bellows so loudly when it is driven by the storm wind round the vaults and hollows of the rock. The cave is accessible only by boat, and, like many another cleft in the soft tufa of this headland, it is believed to hide immeasurable riches, left there since the days when every cliff bore its white Roman villa, and all the shady caverns were the cool arbours of their pleasure grounds. From the Creek of Marechiano, which cleaves the Posilipo in half, up to the very spot on which I sit, there is no break in the succession of the ruins. Ancient cisterns lie upon the beaches, the green tide washes over shattered colonnades, the boatmen peering down through the translucent water as they sink their nets see the light waver round the foundations of old palaces, and the seaweeds stir fantastically on the walls. It is little wonder if no

one of them can rid himself of the belief in spirits wandering yet about the wreck of so much splendour, or shake off the fear

> "Lest the dead should from their sleep,
> Bursting o'er the starlit deep,
> Lead a rapid masque of death
> O'er the waters of his path."

As for this cave of the thunders, the story goes that one day certain Englishmen presented themselves before a boatman who was lounging on the quay of Santa Lucia at Naples and demanded whether he would take them on his skiff into the grotto.

Pepino had seen the cavern many times, and did not fear it. "Why not?" he said, and the bargain was struck. As they rowed across the crescent bay of the Chiaia, past the Palazzo di Donna Anna, and under the hillside where the whispering pines grow down the high cliff faces, and golden lemons glow in the shade of marble terraces, the Englishmen were very silent; and Pepino, who loved chatter, began to feel oppressed. He did not quite like the zeal with which they sat studying a huge volume; for he knew that great books were of more use

to magicians than to honest people, who were quite content with little ones, or better still with none at all. So he looked askance at the English students as he guided his boat to the mouth of the grotto of the thunders, and ran in out of the sunshine to the cool green shades and wavering lights among which the old treasure of the Romans lies concealed.

The Englishmen rose up, and one of them, taking the book in both hands, began to read aloud. Who can tell what were the words? They were strange and very potent; for as they rolled and echoed round the sea-cave it seemed as if the vaulted roof rose higher, and Pepino, glancing this way and that in terror, saw that the level of the water was sinking. Shelf by shelf the sea sank down the rock, leaving dripping walls of which no living man had ever seen the shape before; and Pepino, keeping the boat steady with his oars, shook with fear as he saw the top of a marble staircase rear itself erect and shiny out of the depths of the ocean. Still the English student rolled out the sonorous words, which rang triumphantly through the

cave, and still the water sank stair by stair, till suddenly it paused—the reader's voice had stopped, and slowly, steadily the sea began to rise again.

The spell was broken. A page was missing from the book! The Englishman in despair clutched at the pages as if he would tear them piecemeal. Instantly the crash of thunder rang through the cave, the sea surged back to its old level, the marble staircase leading to the treasure was engulphed, and the boatman, screaming on the name of the Madonna, was whirled out of the cavern into the light of day again.

Close below me is a little reef or island of yellow pozzolano stone, jutting out from the Punta di Coroglio, which is the name of the most westerly cliff of the Posilipo, that through which the tunnel runs. Under the island there is a tiny creek with a beach of yellow sand; the spot is so silent that I can hear the ripple plashing on the beach. That rock is a famous one. It is the "Scoglio di Virgilio," the Rock of Virgil, by all tradition a favourite haunt of the great poet, and the spot in which he practised his enchantments.

Petrarch said he did not believe in those enchantments. But then King Robert questioned him about them at a moment when both were riding with a gallant party, and the joy of life was surging high enough to make men doubt all achievements but those of battle or of love. Had Petrarch sat alone watching the sunset bathe the Scoglio di Virgilio with gold, he might have judged the matter differently. At any rate twenty generations of Neapolitans since his day have accepted the beliefs of thirty more who went before them, and set down Virgil as a magician. Why must we be wiser than fifty generations of mankind?

To be a wizard is not to be wicked! Virgil's fair fame is in no danger. There was no malignity in any of the spells wrought out on that little headland. Each of them conferred a benefit on the city which the poet loved. One by one the woes of Naples were assuaged by the beneficent enchanter; its flies, its serpents, the fatal tendency of butcher's meat to go bad, exposure to volcanic fires, all were held in check by the power of the enchanter.

A stranger visiting Naples ten centuries ago would have found it studded with the ingenious inventions of the wizard. Perhaps the device for bridling the audacity of Vesuvius might be the first to strike him. It was nothing less then a horse of bronze bestridden by an archer, whose notched arrow was ever on the string, its point directed at the summit of the mountain. This menace sufficed to hold the unruly demons of the fire in check, and might do so to this hour, were it not that one day a countryman coming into Naples from the Campagna, and looking at the statue for the hundredth time felt bored by seeing the archer had not fired off his arrow yet, and so did it for him. The shaft sped through the air, striking the rim of the crater, which straightway boiled over and spouted fire, and from that day to this no man has found the means of placing another arrow on the string. It is a thousand pities. San Gennaro has taken up the duty now, and stands pointing imperiously with outstretched hand bidding the volcano halt. He had some success too. In 1707, when the fires of the volcano turned night into day, and its

smoke converted day into night, San Gennaro was carried in procession as far as the Porta Capuana, and had no sooner come in sight of the mountain than the thunders ceased, the smoke was scattered, the stars appeared, and Naples was at peace. But as a rule the holiness of the saint impresses the demons less than the menace of the arrow, and the mountain goes on burning.

As for the bronze fly which the good poet made and set high on one of the city gates, where it banished every other insect from the town, it certainly is not in Naples now. Many people must have wished it were. The story runs that the young Marcellus was intercepted by Virgil one day as he was going fowling, and desired to decide whether he would rather have a bird which would catch all other birds, or a fly which would drive away all flies. Nobody who knows Naples can doubt the answer. Marcellus, it is true, thought fit to consult the Emperor Augustus before replying; but that fact only adds to the weight of his decision. He decided on the fly, and many a man listening in the midnight to the deadly humming outside his

mosquito curtains will lament the loss of Virgil's fly.

It is an Englishman, one John of Salisbury, who collects these pretty tales for us; and he has another which, as it supplies a reason for an historical fact which must have puzzled many people in the history of Naples, is the better worth recording, and may indeed have the luck to please both clever and stupid people in one moment.

The puzzling fact is to discover how on earth it happened that the city which in Middle Ages bore a somewhat evil reputation for surrendering itself light-heartedly at the first summons of any conqueror, yet held such a different repute in earlier days, having remained faithful to the Greek Empire in Constantinople when Amalfi had fallen and Salerno received a stranger garrison, which resisted heroically every attack of Lombard or of Norman, and saw army after army retire baffled from before its walls. Whither had all that stout-heartedness fled in the days when French, Spanish, and German conquerors found no more resistance in the Siren city than in a beautiful woman to whom one man's

love is as much as any other's? How came that old glory to sink into shame, to accept slavery and to forget faith? The answer is that in the old days the city was kept by a spell of the enchanter Virgil.

Virgil, it seems, musing on this point of rock throughout long moonlight nights, had constructed a palladium. It consisted of a model of the city, inclosed in a glass bottle, and as long as this fragile article remained intact the hosts of besiegers encamped in vain beneath the walls. The Emperor Henry the Sixth was the first who managed to break it. The city fathers rushed to their palladium to discover why for the first time it had failed to protect them. The reason was but too plain. There was a small crack in the glass!

Through that crack all the virtue went out of the palladium, and until the great upstirring of heroic hearts which the world owes to France at the close of the last century, Naples was never credited again with any marked disposition to resist attack or to strike courageously for freedom. I am not sure whether those who know best the inner heart

of Naples would claim that the great deeds wrought since then are to be attributed to any new palladium; but, for my part, if spells are to be spoken of, I prefer to hold that the long age of sloth and slavery is that which needs the explanation of black magic, and that neither the loyal Naples of old days nor the free Naples of the present time owes any debt to other sources than its own high spirit and its natural stout heart which slept for centuries, but are now awake again.

The setting sun has dropped so far towards the sea that the tide begins to wash in grey and gold around the yellow cliffs. The bay is covered with dark shades falling from the sky in masses, and a little wind rising from the west ruffles the water constantly. Only the ridge of Ischia yet holds the light, and there it seems as if a river of soft gold flowed along the mountain-top, vivid and pure, turning all the peak of Epomeo to a liquid reflection, impalpable as the sky itself. But the glow fades even as I watch it; and the approach of chilly evening warns me not to loiter on the lonely hillside. I wander down across the hollow, passing near the broken

theatre, and so strike a path which climbs up the further hill between high walls and hedges, where it is already almost dark, bringing me out at length on the main road which crosses the headland, just where a row of booths is set to catch the soldi of those Neapolitans who have strayed out here in search of evening freshness. There is a clear, sharp air upon this high ground; and the young moon climbing up the sky sends a faint, silvery light upon the sea. The road winds on as beautifully as a man need wish. On the left hand rises the hill, on the right the ground drops in sharp, swift slopes, cleft with deep ravines where the cliff is sometimes sheer and sometimes passable for men. All these hollows are filled with vegetation of surpassing beauty—here a belt of dark green pines, there a grove of oranges thatched over to protect them from the sun. Golden lemons gleam out of the rich foliage, hanging thick and numberless upon the trees. The bare stems of fig trees are bursting out into their first yellow leaf; and the hedges of red roses and abutilon fill every nook with masses of bright colour unknown except in lands

where spring comes with gentle touch and warm, sweet days of sunny weather. Far down amid the depths of this luxuriance of fruit and flowers the sea washes round some creek or curved white beach, and there built out with terraces and balconies of pure white stone are villas which repeat the splendour of those Roman homes over whose ruins they are built and whose altars lie still in the innumerable caverns which pierce the base of the old legendary headland.

In the silvery dusk of this spring evening the beauty of these ravines brimming over with fruits and flowers is quite magical. I pause beside a low wall, over which a man may lean breast high, and gaze down through the shadows spreading fast among the trellised paths below. The fading light has robbed the lemons of their colour; but the crimson roses are flaming still against a heavy background of dark firs, and beyond them the path winds out upon a little beach, where the tide breaks at the foot of yellow cliffs, and a boat is rocking at her moorings. Beyond the outline of the wooded cliff the grey sea lies darkening like a steely mirror; and

lifting my eyes I can see the spit of rock on which stands the enchanted Castle of the Egg, black and grim as ever, and higher still Vesuvius towering amid the pale sky and the stars, its slowly coiling pillar of dark smoke suffused with a rosy glow, the reflection of the raging furnace hidden in its cone. Already one or two lamps are flashing on the shore. The day is nearly gone, and the beautiful Southern night is come.

Many people had wandered up from Naples to enjoy the taste of approaching summer on this height, where surely the scent of roses is more poignant than elsewhere and the outlook over land and sea is of incomparable beauty. As I walked on slowly down the road my ears caught the tremulous shrill melody of a mandolin, and a man's voice near at hand trolled forth the pretty air of "La vera sorrentina." I stopped to listen. The voice was sweet enough, and some passion was in the singer.

"Ma la sgrata sorrentina
Non ha maje di me pietà!"

The music came from a little roadside restaurant, half open to the sky, where a few

people sat at tables overlooking the sea. I strolled in, and sat sipping my vino di Posilipo while the mandolin thrummed till the singer grew tired, took his fees, and went off to some other café. The wine is not what it was in Capaccio's days. "Semper Pausilypi vigeat poculum!" cries the jolly topographer, "and may Jupiter himself lead the toasts!" By all means, if he will; but I fear the son of Saturn will not be tempted from Olympus by the contents of the purple beaker set before me at the price of three soldi. "It is pure, it is fragrant, it is delicious," Capaccio goes on, waxing more eloquent with every glass. "In the fiercest heat it is grateful to the stomach, it goeth down easily, it promoteth moisture, it molesteth neither the liver nor the reins, nor doth it even obfuscate the head! Its virtue is not of those that pass away; for whether of this year, last year, or of God knows when, it hath still the scent of flowers, and lyeth sweetly on the tongue." I think Capaccio must have had a vineyard here, and sold his wines by auction. Far beneath me I could hear the washing of the sea, and the moon climbing up the sky scat-

THE PIAZZA SAN FERDINANDO AND THE CASTEL SANT' ELMO.

tered a gleam of silver here and there upon the water. Naples stretched darkly round the curving shore, while high upon the ridge the Castle of St. Elmo stood out black and solid against the night sky, with the low priory in front, sword and cowl dominating the city, as ever through her history, whether for good or ill.

In dusk or sunshine no man who looks upon this view will need to ask why Virgil loved it, and desired to be buried near the spot whence he had been used to watch it. Not far away upon my left, above the grotto which leads to Pozzuoli, is the tomb traditionally known as his. There are many who believe and some who doubt; but there is a mediæval tale about the matter which is well worth telling. It was commonly reported in the days of Hohenstaufen and Anjou that the bones of Virgil were buried in a castle surrounded by the sea. There is no other fortress to which this could apply than the Castle of the Egg.

In the reign of Roger, King of Sicily, a certain scholar—they are always English, in these legends!—who had wandered far in

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quest of learning, came into the royal presence with a petition. The King, who found him wise and grave, and took pleasure in his conversation, was willing to grant his wish, whatever it might be; whereon the Englishman replied that he would not abuse the royal favour, nor beg for any mere ephemeral pleasure, but would ask a thing which in the eyes of men must seem but small, namely, that he might have the bones of Virgil, wheresoever he might find them in the realm of Sicily. It was even then long since forgotten in what spot precisely the body of the great poet had been laid; and it seemed to the King little likely that a stranger from the north should be able to discover what had remained hidden from the Neapolitans. So he gave consent, and the Englishman set forth for Naples, armed with letters to the Duke, giving him full power to search wherever he would. The citizens themselves had no fear of his success in a quest where they had often failed, and so made no effort to restrain him. The scholar searched and dug, guiding his operations by the power of magic. At last he broke into the centre

of a mountain, where not one cleft betrayed the existence of any cavity or tomb. There lay the body of the mighty poet, unchanged and calm as if he slept. Full eleven centuries he had lain silently in a rest unbroken by the long resounding tread of barbarous armies from the north, flooding and desolating the fair empire which must have seemed to him likely to outlast the world. I wish that some one of those who broke into the sepulchre, and shed the light of day once more upon those features which had slept so long in darkness, had told us with what feelings he looked upon them and saw the very lips that had spoken to Augustus, and the cheek which Horace kissed. I think the men who found themselves in the sudden presence of so much greatness must have stood there with a certain tremor, as those others did who not long afterwards disturbed the bones of Arthur and of Guenevere at Glastonbury, daring to lift and touch the long fair tresses which brought Lancelot to shame.

These men who found the tomb of Virgil would have done well if they had sealed it up again and lost the secret, so that the

bones might lie unto this hour on the spot where the spirit is so well remembered. But the English scholar had the King's warrant, and claimed at least the books on which the wizard's head was propped. Those the Duke of Naples gave him, but the bones he refused, and had them taken for greater safety to Castel dell'Uovo, where they lay behind an iron grating and were shown to anyone who desired to see them. But if they were at any time disturbed, the air would darken suddenly, high gusts of storm would roar around the battlements of the castle, and the sea beating heavily about the rocks would rage as if demanding vengeance for the insult.

Such is the tale told by Gervasius of Tilbury, who had been dead almost half as long as Virgil. It may be true or untrue. I am not fond of climbing up into the judgment seat, or attempting to recognise white-robed truth in the midst of the throng of less worthy, though more amusing characters, which throng Italian legend. Least of all on such a night as this, when the soft wind blowing over the sea from the enchanted

VIRGIL'S TOMB.

Castle of the Egg fills the air with whispering suggestions of old dead things and calls back many a tale of inimitable tragedy wrought out upon the shore of the gulf which lies before me—a furnace in all ages of hot passions and sensuous delights such as leave deep marks upon the memory of man. That most wilful quality is not unlike the echo in the hollow of some overhanging rock. It will repeat the sounds that please it, but no others, while even those it will distort, adding something wild or unearthly to every one, however ordinary. So the memory of the people selects capriciously those circumstances which it cherishes; and even while it hands them on from generation to generation it is ever adding fact to fact with the cunning of him who writes a fairy tale, casting glamour round the sordid details, struggling towards the beautiful or terrible—even not seldom towards the scandalous.

A little lower on the slope of the hill, well in sight from the point at which I sit, there is a vast and ruined building on the very margin of the sea. In the dusk light I can clearly see its two huge wings thrust out

PALACE OF DONNA ANNA CIBELLA.
XVII CENTURY.

into the water, and the broken outline of its roof breaking the pale sky. The tide washes round its foundations. The whole mass lies black and silent, except at one point where a restaurant has intruded itself into the shell of a once splendid hall, and lights flicker round the empty windows which were built for the pleasure of a Court. Three hundred years ago this palace was begun for the wife of a Spanish viceroy, Donna Anna Carafa. It was never finished, and has been put to a number of degrading uses, being at one time a quarantine station, at another a stable for the horses of the tramway, while a few fishermen have always housed their wives and children in its old ruined chambers, undeterred by the tales which associate the ruin with the spirit of the Queen Giovanna.

Queen Giovanna is so great a personage in Naples that it is worth while to consider her particularly. There are few spots within thirty miles of Naples where one does not hear of her too amorous life and her tragic death. I doubt if there are half a dozen guides or vetturini in all the city who, if asked the name of this great building, will

not answer that it is "Il Palazzo della Regina Giovanna," and on being further questioned will not tell a doleful story of how she was strangled in one of the deserted chambers. The stranger, ignorant of Naples, will perhaps set down this fact, pleased to discover a trace of history yet lingering in the recollection of the people, and will cherish it carefully until he is told the same tale at Castel Capuano, on the other side of the city, with the addition of certain particulars which, by our narrow northern way of thinking, are damaging to Queen Giovanna's character. For instance, it is said of her that she was in those early days so convinced a democrat as to choose her lovers freely from among the sovereign people. They were doubtless gratified by her choice; but the pleasure faded when they discovered in due course of time that each favourite in turn, after the fickle Queen grew tired of him, was expected or compelled to leap from the top of a high tower, thus carrying all his knowledge of the secret scandals of a Court by a short cut into the next world. A cruel Queen, it is true; but how prudent! Any one of us might

leave a marvellous sweet memory of himself in the world, if only he could stop the mouths of—— But that has nothing to do with Queen Giovanna.

This sweet memory, however, this fruit of prudence, is precisely what the Queen has attained in Naples and in all the surrounding country. I have questioned many peasants who spoke to me about her, and received the invariable answer that she was a good Queen, a very good Queen—in fact, of the best. Now history, listening to this declaration, sighs and shakes her head despairingly. There were two queens named Giovanna—leaving out several others who, for various reasons, do not come into the reckoning. The first was certainly a better woman than the second, but she is credibly believed to have begun her reign when quite a girl by murdering her first husband, after which she departed in various ways from the ideal of Sunday-schools. The second was an atrocious woman, concerning whose ways of life it is better to say as little as possible. The first was strangled, though not in Naples, or its neighbourhood, but at the Castle of Muro, far

down in Apulia. The second had innumerable lovers, and was, perhaps, one of the worst women ever born.

The Queen Giovanna of tradition seems to be a blend of these two sovereigns, laden with the infirmities of both, and loved the more for the burden of the scandals which she bears. It is a charming trait, this disposition of poor humanity to glorify dead sinners! Conscious of their own imperfections, mindful of the condescension of a queen who steps down to the moral level of her people, the Neapolitans welcome her with outstretched hands, and love her for her peccadilloes. Legend confers a pleasanter immortality than history, earned less painfully, bestowed more charitably, and quite as durable.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RIVIERA DI CHIAIA AND SOME STRANGE THINGS WHICH OCCURRED THERE.

In bright sunshine I came down the last slopes of the Posilipo, wending towards the Riviera di Chiaia. The bay sparkled with innumerable colours; the hills lay in morning shadow; Vesuvius was dark and sullen, and the twin peaks of Capri rested on the horizon like the softest cloud. The sun fell very sweetly among the oranges in the villa gardens, lighting up their dark and glossy leaves with quick-changing gleams which moved and went as lightly as if reflected from the restless waters of the bay. Out on the sea there was a swarm of fishing boats, each provided with a rod of monstrous length; while as I reached the level of the sea, and entered on the winding road that goes to Naples, I found myself skirting a long, narrow beach, of which the reeking odours proclaimed it to be a landing-place of fishers.

There, under the shadow of the towering cliff, boats were hauled up, nets were drying, fish frails were piled in heaps, and close to a small stone pier which jutted out into the water a couple of fishing-wives were scolding each other much in the same way as two dames of Brixham or of Newlyn, while a small urchin, prone upon the sand, watched the encounter of wits with eager curiosity to know whether more was to come of it or not.

More did not come of it. The strife sank into silence, and as I paced along the margin of the little beach, glancing now at the wide curve of the bay, now at the dark fortress of the enchanted Castle of the Egg upon its further horn, I found myself in a strange medley of ancient thoughts and modern ones, the old world wrestling with the new, tales of the kings of Aragon mingling with the cries of cabmen and the whirring noises of the tramways.

This little beach by which I stand is all that is now left of the Marina di Chiaia, which once ran round the bay up to the rocks and caverns of the Chiatamone, where the Egg Castle juts out into the sea. It was all

a sandy foreshore, with boats hauled up and nets set out to dry, just as one may see them on this scrap which still remains. It was renowned as a place of ineffable odours. Indeed, an ancient writer, seeking a simile for a certain very evil smell, could think of none more striking than "that which one smells on the Marina di Chiaia in the evening." It is to be gathered that the women were in large measure responsible for this—as for most other things that go wrong in Naples. "Tutt' e' peccate murtali so' femmene," says the proverb, all the mortal sins are feminine, and if those, why not the smells also? But it is not to be supposed that the women of the Chiaia were the less attractive. Far from that. We have the word of the poet del Tufo that they were so gracious and charming that even a dead man would not remain insensible to the desire of loving them. What can have become of these houris? I did much desire to see them, but I searched in vain. I found none but heavy, wide-mouthed women, owning no charm but dirt, and no attractions save a raucous tongue. Perhaps the disappearance of the smells in-

volved the loss of the beauty also. If so, another grudge is to be cherished against the sanitary reformers, who so often in the history of mankind have proved that they know not what they do.

But I was about to speak of King Alfonso of Aragon, a monarch whose story can be forgotten by no one who has given himself the pleasure of reading the superb work in which Guicciardini has told the story of his times, a tale of greatness and of woe immeasurable, having in itself every element of tragedy, with a human interest which throbs even painfully from page to page. Macaulay, by giving currency to a stupid tale about a galley slave who chose the hulks rather than the history, has contrived to rob many of us of a pleasure far greater than can be derived from the antitheses in which he himself delights; and has spread abroad the impression that this prince among historians, this dignified and simple writer, this unsurpassed judge of men whom he himself in a wiser moment compared to Tacitus, was dull! It is but one more injustice done by Macaulay's hasty fancy, serving well to prove what mischief may

be wrought by a man who cannot deny himself the pleasure of a quirk until he has reflected what injury it may do to another's reputation.

Alfonso of Aragon was King of Naples when the French, led by their King Charles the Eighth, were advancing through Italy to the attack of Naples. The old title of the House of Anjou which reigned in Naples for near two centuries, was in the French judgment not extinct; and Charles, called into Italy by Ludovic the Moor, Duke of Milan, and one of the greatest scoundrels of all ages, was pressing on through the peninsula faster and with more success than either his friends wished or his enemies had feared. One by one the obstacles which were to have detained him in northern Italy crumbled at his approach. Florence was betrayed by Piero di Medici; the Neapolitan armies in the Romagna were driven back; the winter was mild, offering no obstacle to campaigning; the Pope was overawed; and at length Alfonso, seeing the enemy victorious everywhere, and now almost at his gates, fell into a strange state of nerves. The first warrior of his age broke down like a panic-stricken

RIVIERA DI CHIAIA AND THE VILLA MUNICIPALE.

girl. The strong, proud King fell a prey to fear. He could not sleep, for the night was full of haunting terrors, and out of the dark there came to visit him the spectres of men whom he had slain by treachery, each one seeming to rejoice at the vengeance of which Heaven had made the French King the instrument.

Yet Alfonso had large and well-trained armies at his command, and the passes of the kingdom were easily defended. The French were no nearer than at Rome; and anyone who has travelled between the Eternal City and Naples must see how easily even in our own days a hostile army could be held among the mountains. Had there been a resolute defence, many a month might yet have passed before a single Frenchman reached the Siren city. But Alfonso could give no orders; and his terrors were completed by a vision which appeared to one of his courtiers in a dream repeated on three successive nights. It was the spirit of the old King Ferdinand which appeared to the affrighted Jacopo, grave and dignified as when all trembled before him in his life, and commanded, first in

gentle words and afterwards with terrifying threats, that he should go forthwith to King Alfonso, telling him that it was vain to hope to stem the French invasion; that fate had declared their house was to be troubled with infinite calamities, and at length to be stamped out in punishment for the many deeds of enormous cruelty which the two had committed, but above all for that one wrought, at the persuasion of Alfonso, in the Church of San Lionardo in the Chiaia when he was returning home from Pozzuoli.

The spirit gave no details of this crime. There was no need. The mere reference to it completed Alfonso's overthrow. Whatever the secret may have been it scored the King's heart with recollections which he could not face when conjured up in this strange and awful manner. There was no longer any resource for him. His life was broken once for all, and hastily abdicating his kingdom in favour of his son, Ferdinand, whose clean youth was unstained by any crimes, he carried his remorse and all his sinful memories to a monastery in Sicily, where he died, perhaps in peace.

No man who reads this tale can refrain from wondering where was this Church of San Lionardo on the Chiaia, and what it was that King Alfonso did there. The first question is easier than the last to answer, yet there are some materials for satisfying curiosity in regard to both.

It is useless to seek for the Church of San Lionardo now. It was swept away when the fine roadway was made which skirts the whole sea-front from the Piazza di Vittoria to the Torretta. But in old days it must have been a rarely picturesque addition to the beauty of the bay. It stood upon a little island rock, jutting out into the sea about the middle of the curve, near the spot where the aquarium now stands. It was connected with the land by a low causeway, not unlike that by which the Castle of the Egg is now approached; and it was a place of peculiar interest and sanctity, apart from its conspicuous and beautiful position, because from the days of its first foundation it had claimed a special power of protection over those who were tormented by the fear of shipwreck or captivity, both common cases in the lives

of the dwellers on a shore haunted by pirates and often vexed by storms. The foundation was due to the piety of a Castilian gentleman, Lionardo d'Oria, who, being in peril of wreck so long ago as the year 1028, vowed a church in honour of his patron saint upon the spot, wherever it might be, at which he came safely to land. The waves drove him ashore upon this beach, midway between Virgil's Tomb and the enchanted Castle of the Egg; and here his church stood for seven hundred years and more upon its rocky islet—a refuge and a shrine for all such as went in peril by land or sea.

Naturally enough, the thoughts of Neapolitans turned easily in days of trouble to the saint whose special care it was to extricate them. Many a fugitive slipped out of Naples in the dark and sped furtively along the sandy beach to the island church, whence, as he knew perfectly, he could embark on board a fishing-boat with far better hope of getting clear away than if he attempted to escape from Naples. Thus at all moments of disturbance in the city the chance was good that important persons were in hiding in the

Church of San Lionardo waiting the favourable moment of escape. King Alfonso must have known this perfectly. One may even surmise that his journey to Pozzuoli was undertaken with the object of tempting out rebellious barons and their followers from the city, where they might be difficult to find, into this solitary spot, where he could scarcely miss them. If so, he doubtless gloated over the first sight of the island church as he came riding down from the Posilipo and out upon the beach towards it, knowing that the trap was closed and the game his own.

Alfonso was a man who never knew mercy. Who the fugitives were whom he found hidden in the church, or in what manner they met their death, is, so far as I know, recorded nowhere. But this we know, that it was no ordinary death, no mere strangling or beheading of rebellious subjects that the King sanctioned and perhaps watched in this lonely church which was built as a refuge for troubled men. Of such deeds there were so many scored up to the account of both kings that the spirit of the elder could hardly have

reproached his son with any one of them. What was done in the Church of San Lionardo was something passing the common cruelty of even Spaniards in those ages, and it is perhaps a merciful thing that oblivion has descended on the details.

I shall return again to King Alfonso and his family, for the city is full of memories of them, and in the vaults of the Castel Nuovo there are things once animate which throw a terrible light upon the practices of the House of Aragon. But for the time this may be enough of horrors; and I turn with pleasure to the long sea-front against which the tide is breaking fresh and pleasantly, surging white and foaming over the black rocks which skirt the foot of the sea-wall. The wind comes freshly out of the east. Capri is growing into a wonderful clearness. Even the little town upon the saddle of the island begins to glow white and sparkling, and the limestone precipices show their clefts and shadows in the increasing light. The soft wind blows in little sunny gusts, which shake the blossoms of wistaria on the house-fronts, mingling the salt and fishy odours of the

beach with the scent of flowers in the villa gardens. There is scarce a sign of cloud in the warm sky, and all the crescent bay between me and the city takes colours which are perpetually changing into deeper tints of liquid blue and rare soft green, with flashes here and there of brown, and exquisite reflections which are but half seen before they yield to others no less beautiful. The long white sea-wall gleams like the setting of a gem, and the warm air trembles slightly in the distance, so that the Castle of the Egg looks as if it were indeed enchanted, and might be near the doom predicted for it when its frail foundations shall be broken.

I had meant to spend an hour this morning in the Church of Sannazzaro, on the slope of the hill, at no great distance from this spot. He who does not see churches betimes in Naples may chance to miss them altogether, and will waste much temper during the hot afternoon in hammering on barred doors with vain effort to rouse sleepy sacristans. Heaven knows I am not indifferent to church architecture, and had the morning been less beautiful I should certainly have described learnedly enough,

the building preserving the memory of the quaint and artificial poet whom Bembo, as frigid and unnatural as himself, declared to be next to Virgil in fame, as he was also next in sepulture. I often wonder whether Bembo really meant anything at all by this judgment, except an elegant turn of verse. If he did—— But I am straying away from the lights and shadows of this magic morning, which are far more delightful than the arcadian rhapsodies of Sannazzaro and of Bembo. Let me put them both aside. Or stay, one observation of the former comes into mind. He said the Mergellina was "Un pezzo di cielo caduto in terra"—a scrap of heaven fallen down on earth. He had blood in him, then, this worshipper of nymphs and classicism; let us go and see his Mergellina. It will not take us far from the sea-front, to which it once lay open, in the days when there were no grand hotels, nor ugly boarding-houses blocking out the sweet colours and the clean air of the sea.

As I turn inland, my eye is caught by a tablet on a house-front to the left, which has a melancholy interest for all Englishmen:—

STREET IN CHIAIA.

"IN QUESTA CASA NACQUE FRANCESCO CARACCIOLI
AMMIRAGLIO
IL 18 GUIGNO 1752
STRANGOLATO AL 29 GUIGNO 1799"

"Strangolato"—ay, hung at Nelson's yardarm, while his flagship lay off Naples, and sunk afterwards in the sea, whence his naked body was washed up on shore. It is a foul story; a black stain on the memory of a hero whose achievements were too great for any man to attempt a judgment, or to strike a balance between his virtues and his sins. I turn my back upon the tablet, and wish that I could forget it.

In a few yards further the whole charming length of Sannazzaro's bit of heaven lies spread out before me. A wide, straight street, a paradise of yellow stucco, stained and peeling off, a wilderness of sordid shops and dirty children running wild, a solitary tramcar spinning on its way to Naples, a creaking cart with vegetables, a huckster bawling fish—I have not patience to catalogue the delights of the Mergellina of to-day, but turn my back on them and flee to the sea-front again, where I can look out on

what is still unspoiled, because man has no dominion over it.

A short stroll towards the city within reach of the lapping waves restored my temper, and I remembered that as I fled from the Mergellina I saw over my shoulder a halting-place for tramcars, well known to all who visit Naples by the name of the "Torretta."

I hardly know how many of those visitors have asked themselves what this Torretta was, to which they have so often paid their fares of twenty-five centimes, or have connected it in memory with the other towers of which they hear upon the further side of Naples. But since Naples is a seaborn city, and a wealthy city by the shore of ocean attracts pirates as naturally as flies flock to honey, it may be as well to explain why the Torretta was built.

The tale goes back as far as the days of Don Fernando Afan de Rivera, Duca d'Alcala, who did Naples the honour of condescending to govern it as Viceroy to His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain from the years 1629 to 1631. He was an old and gouty

viceroy, but not lacking in energy or courage. Those were times in which infinite numbers of Turkish pirates hovered round the coasts of Italy; and week by week the warning cannon roared out from Ischia, and the heavy toll of the alarm bells rolled along the shore from Campanella and Castellammare to the harbours beneath Vesuvius, waking all the fishermen to watchfulness and rousing the guards within the city walls.

"All' arme! all' arme! la Campana sona,
Li Turche so' arrivati a la marina!"

The terror-stricken refrain is still on the lips of the peasants in the coasts which were harried by Dragut and Ucchiali.

One night a band of these bold Corsairs struck suddenly in the darkness, and landed on the western end of the Chiaia, well outside the limits of the city. There were among their numbers certain renegades of Naples, and using the local knowledge of these scoundrels, they had conceived the design of capturing the Marchesa del Vasto, whose palace stood in this somewhat unprotected region, and whom they intended to surprise in her

sleep. So rich a prisoner would have brought them a vast ransom; but the scheme turned out disappointing. The Marchesa had gone to take the waters, over the hills at Agnano, whither greedy Turks could not pursue her. Nothing remained but to bag as many people of inferior consequence as time permitted; and the renegades, turning to their advantage the alarm which was already spreading among the inhabitants, rushed about knocking at every door and imploring the people in anguished tones to come out at once and save themselves from the Turks, who were landing at that moment. Some poor frightened souls were simple enough to accept this invitation, and were made prisoners for their pains the moment they crossed the threshold. Others, more wisely, suspecting the trick, made rude replies, and barred their doors and shutters, knowing that at dawn, if not before, help must surely come from the neighbouring city.

They were not mistaken in their faith. Naples was astir, and the guards were mustering by torchlight in the streets. The Duca d'Alcala was at the Palazzo Stigliano,

near the Porta di Chiaia. Old and gouty as he was, he had set himself at the head of his men, the city gate was flung open, and in the grey light of morning the Turks saw a considerable force advancing on them. They did not stay to fight, but pushed off their ships, carrying with them twenty-four prisoners, whom next day they signified that they were willing to ransom. Accordingly parleys were held upon the Island of Nisida; the Viceroy himself paid part of the sum demanded, while the rest was contributed by the Society for the Redemption of Captives, a useful public institution whose income was heavily drawn upon in those days. Probably neither one nor the other was entirely pleased at having to pay out a large sum for the redemption of people living almost under the walls of the city. It was to guard against such mishaps in future that the Torretta was built, and garrisoned as strongly as its size permitted.

What old tales these seem, and how changed is all the aspect of this bay! San Lionardo gone as completely as the shadow of a drifting cloud! The Torretta degraded

to a halting-place of tramcars! The Mergellina stripped of all that made the poet Sannazzaro love it! Only on the sea-front the same beauty of heavenly blue still shimmers on the waters, breaking into bubbles of pure gold where the soft tide washes up amid the rocks. The fishing boats slip to and fro under their large three-cornered sails. There is more wind out there upon the bay; it strikes in sharp puffs on the bellying canvas, and the light craft heel towards the land. One of them has put in beside the stairs not far from where I am loitering. The bottom of his boat is alive with silvery fish; and on the cool stones of the landing-place, just awash with clear green water, stand the bare-legged fishermen, stooping over the still living fish, cleansing their burnished scales from the soil of the dirty skiff, laughing and chattering like children, as they are. Suddenly one of them snatches at a little object which the others had not noticed, and holds it up to me in gleeful expectation of a few soldi. "Cavallo di mare!" A tiny sea-horse, already stiff and rigid, a clammy and uncomfortable curiosity. My good man, if I desire

to look at sea-horses I have but to cross the road to the aquarium, where I can watch them in the grace and wonder of their life and shall not be asked to cumber myself with their dead bodies. Salvatore shrugs his shoulders. If I am mad enough to miss this chance, it is my own affair; the Madonna will scarce send me another. In the midst of the diatribe I stroll across to the aquarium.

Rarely, if ever, have I passed by this storehouse of great marvels without regretting it, for indeed it has no equal in the world. Tanks of fish are kept in many cities; the only aquarium is at Naples. There alone can one stand and watch the actual stress and movement of the life which passes in the sea, that animal life of myriad shapes and colours which is so like the plants and which while rooted to a rock, and spreading long translucent tendrils like a frond of seaweed will yet curl and uncurl, swaying this way and that in search of food, or in the effort to escape some enemy it fears. For the depths of the sea are full of enemies, and every sense of those which dwell beneath it is alert. There one may see the tube-

dwelling worms, thrust out from the mouth of their tall cylinders like a feathery tuft of tendrils, a revolving fan, which spins and spins until some sea-horse floating up erect and graceful comes too close, and instantly the fan closes, the tendrils disappear and lie hidden till the danger has gone by. Far along the rock clefts, high and low throughout the pools, there is a perpetual watchfulness and motion, a constant stir and trembling; and the provision which the lowest animal possesses for the protection of its life is in quick and momentary use, laying open such a revelation of the infinite resources of nature as itself makes this cool chamber one of the most interesting places in the world.

But if a man go there for beauty only, in what profusion he will find it! The green depths of the tanks are all aglow with soft rich colour. The sea beneath the cliffs at Vico is not more blue on the softest day in spring than the fish which glide by among these shadows; nor are the lights seen from Castellammare when the sun drops down behind Ischia and the rosy flushes spread along the coast, more exquisite than the soft pink

scales which glance through the arches of the rocks. Turquoise and pearl, emerald and jacinth, the gleams caught from the hidden sun above reflect the hues of every gem. The strange, dense vegetation, the quick flash of moving gold and purple, reveal a world of marvellous rich beauty; and if it be indeed the case that those bold divers of past days who dared to plunge out of the bright sun into the dusk and dimness of the ocean depths saw there the orange sponges, the waving forests of crimson weed, and all the myriad colours of the moving fishes glinting through them, it is no wonder that they came back into the world of men spreading tales of countless jewels, and unnumbered treasures which lie buried in the caves and grottoes of the sea.

Naples is alive with stories of this sort; and not Naples only, but all Sicily and southern Italy share the tales of the great diver, Nicolò Pesce, who is sometimes a Sicilian and sometimes a dweller on the mainland, but is claimed by Naples with good reason, as I shall show presently. The mere sight of things so like those which Nicolò must have

seen calls up all the rare stories told of him; and I go up into the Villa Garden, which skirts the long sea-front, and having found a seat beneath a shady palm tree, whence I can watch the blue sea lying motionless around the dark battlements of Castel dell'Uovo, while the wind makes light noises in the feathery boughs above me, I fall to thinking of the diver who, at the bidding of the king, searched the caverns underneath the castle, which no man has ever found but he, and came back with his arms full of jewels. Any child in Naples knows that heaps of gems are lying in those caverns still.

Who was Nicolò Pesce? Ah! what is the use of asking such questions about a myth? He was once, like all of us, a thing which crept about the earth—it matters little when, *nei tempi antichi!* But now he is a butterfly fluttering in the world of romance, a theme for poets, and cherished in the heart of children. If you must know more about his actual existence, catch a child and give him a few soldi to escort you to the foot of the Vico Mezzocannone, away on the further side of the city, where the lanes drop steeply

to the harbour. There, built into the front of a house, you will see an ancient stone, on which is carved the figure of a shaggy man grasping a knife in his right hand, while his left is clenched in the air. That is Nicolò Pesce, so called because he was at home in the water as a fish is; and the knife is that which he used to cut himself out from the bellies of the fish when he had done the long swift journeys which he was wont to make in the manner of which no other man had experience but Jonah.

You may get much more than this from the child, though confidence is hard to gain, and soldi will not always buy it. One day the King bade Nicolò find out what the bottom of the sea is like. The diver plunged, and when he came up gasping he said he had seen gardens of coral and large spaces of ribbed sand strewn with precious stones, and piled here and there with heaps of treasure, mouldering weapons, the ribs of sunken ships and the whitening skeletons of drowned mariners. I well believe it! Ave Maria, Stella Maris, Star of the Sea, be gracious to poor sailors in their peril!

But another time the King bade Nicolò dive down and find out how Sicily floated on the sea, and the man brought up a fearful tale. For he said that groping to and fro in the dim abysses he saw that Sicily had rested on three pillars, whereof one had fallen, one was split and like to fall, and one only stood erect and sound! The years have gone by in many hundreds since that plunge; but no man knows whether the shattered pillar is erect.

Now the King desired to be sure that Nicolò did actually reach the bottom of the sea, and accordingly took him to the summit of a rock where the water was deepest, and there, surrounded by his courtiers, hurled a gold cup far out from the shore. The goblet flashed and sank, and the King bade Nicolò dive and bring it back.

The diver plunged, and the King waited, watching long before the surface of the sea was broken. At last Nicolò rose, brandishing the cup as he swam, and when he had reached shore and won his breath again he cried, "Oh, King, if I had known what I should see, neither this cup nor half your

kingdom would have tempted me to dive." "What did you see?" the King demanded, and the diver answered that he found on the floor of the ocean four impenetrable things. First the great rush of a river which streams out of the bowels of the earth, sweeping all things away before the might of its resistless current; and next a labyrinth of rocks, whose crags overhung the winding ways between them. Then he was beaten hither and thither by the flux and reflux of the waters out of the lowest parts of ocean; and lastly, he dared not pass the monsters which stretched out long tentacles as if to clutch him and draw him into the caverns of the rocks. So he groped and wandered in mortal fear, till at last he saw the gleam of gold upon a shelf of rock and grasped the cup and came up into the world again.

Now the King pondered long upon this story, and then taking the cup flung it into the sea once more, and bade Nicolò dive again. The fellow begged hard that he might not go, but the King was ruthless, and the waters closed over the diver. The day waned, the night came on, and still the King

waited on the crag beside the sea. But Nicolò Pesce the diver was never seen again.

Many a child has thrilled over this story as told in Schiller's verse,—"Wer wagt es, Rittersman oder Knapp . . ." you ask—What is the truth of these old stories? I answer that they have neither truth nor falsity, and that is enough for most of us in this dull world, of which so much has to be purged away before the beauty can appear. The flower-laden boughs in this villa garden go on rustling in the sunny wind; the Judas trees are gay with purple blossoms, and from the long, straight avenue, where white marble statues gleam in the cool shades, the cries and laughter of the children ring out merrily. Tell a child these tales and he will doubt nothing, reason over nothing, but accept the beauty and talk of it with quickened breath and glowing cheeks. That is the wisdom of the babes. Let us be content to copy it.

CHAPTER V.

THE ENCHANTED CASTLE OF THE EGG AND THE SUCCESSION OF THE KINGS WHO HELD IT.

In Naples one is never very far from history, and when I arose from my pleasant seat beneath the palm tree, plodding on down the long and beautiful avenue of the Villa garden I came out at no great distance on the sunny Piazza della Vittoria—a name which, I suspect, connects itself in the fancy of many visitors with some of the wild triumphs of Garibaldi. But the piazza has an older history than that. It commemorates the sea battle of Lepanto, in which Don John of Austria, the youthful son of the great Emperor Charles the Fifth and of Barbara Blomberg, washerwoman of Ratisbon, led the united fleets of Venice, Spain, and Rome into the Gulf of Lepanto as the Turks were coming out and administered a drubbing under which the throne of the Caliph rocked and

tottered, all so long ago as the year 1576. Naples had the best of reasons, as I have said already, for rejoicing over any event which reduced the sea power of the Turks, and I do not doubt that the child of Kaiser and of washerwoman had an intoxicating triumph on this spot which has so long forgotten him.

At this point I hesitate, as the ass did between two bundles, a dilemma often thrust on one in Naples. For if I turn towards my left and mount the hill, I reach the Piazza dei Martiri and the pleasant strangers' quarter. But since my aim is not to describe things known easily to all who visit Naples, but rather to talk at large of what the guide-books do not mention, I take the other way and move out on the sea-front again, just where the Via Partenope, a new road, runs towards the ancient castle at the point.

As I approach the centre of this ancient city, scene of so many bitter conflicts, it becomes the more needful to select those epochs which are most worthy to be remembered, to let all the ghosts of great names flutter by except a few, and those the few whose mem-

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ories rise oftenest. The choice is easy. All the deepest tragedy of Naples closes round the fall of the House of Hohenstaufen and the fall of that of Aragon. I must explain briefly how these houses held the throne of Naples and of Sicily.

The Normans founded that kingdom in the year 1130. They won it by conquest from Lombards and from Saracens; and they placed their capital at Palermo, where their rule on the whole was just and splendid, and their throne gained lustre from Arab art and Arab learning, so that those were happy days for Naples and Sicily, held by strong sovereigns who kept in check all dangers from without. But even in the good times the seed of trouble was sprouting fast; for the first Normans, superstitious in their piety, and anxious to obtain a legal title to the lands their swords had won, accepted the feudal lordship of the Pope; and thus originated the papal claim to alter the succession of the realm at will.

The male line of the Normans failed. Constance, the heiress of the house, carried the throne to the Emperor Henry VI., son of

the great Barbarossa, and as resolved as he to turn into realities the shadowy claims of the emperors to the overlordship of all Italy. But the popes already claimed the universal spiritual dominion, as the emperors claimed the temporal; and since in the rough-thinking minds of men there was but little comprehension of the theoretical distinction between the dominions of spirit and of matter, it happened often that even in the understanding of Pope and Kaiser themselves the difference was lost, and the two claims worked out to rivalry and the clash of interests which wrought much bloodshed.

There was not room in Italy for two universal rulers, both holding of God, even though one ruled spiritual things and the other temporal. The theory was clear, but who could interpret the practice on all occasions. Every pope was greedy for temporalities; and no kaiser, unless wholly occupied in taming rebellious barons beyond the Alps, could refrain from meddling with spiritual affairs. Thus arose two parties throughout Italy, and all the land was cleft with the feuds of Guelf and Ghibelline, the

former holding to the Pope, the latter dreaming, as Dante did, of the days when the Emperor should descend from the Alps again brandishing the sword of judgment, and purge away the foulness from the lovely cities which stood oppressed and mourning. Day and night, in the fancy of the great Florentine, Rome lay weeping, widowed and alone, calling constantly, "Cesare mio, why hast thou deserted me?"

More often than not the emperors did not come, and the Pope grew ever stronger. But when the successor of St. Peter saw his great rival established by natural inheritance in the territory which was not only the fairest of all Italy, but also the one over which he claimed feudal rights, it was certain that there could be no peace; and the conflict might have broken out at once had not the Emperor died and his widow granted the Church great power over her young son, whom the Pope might naturally hope to mould into what he would.

But the lad grew up strong and self-reliant, a noble and a splendid monarch, worthy of the fame which clings to this day about

the name of the Emperor Frederick the Second. Alone of all the line of Western Emperors this one lived by choice in Italy. He loved the blue sea and the purple mountains which guard the land of Sicily. His heart was in the white coast towns of Apulia and the ranges of long low hills which look towards the Adriatic over the flat plains of Foggia, where the hawks wheel screaming in the clear air and the great mountain shrine of Monte Gargano towers blue and dim above the heel of Italy. He loved the Arab art and learning. He was no mean poet—a troubadour, moreover; and withal a just and upright ruler, with aims far greater than those of the age in which he lived, a monarch born for the happiness of nations, had only the Pope been able to bate a little of his pride and tolerate the rival at his gates.

But those were days in which the Popes would endure no compromise; and from the hour in which he entered man's estate to that in which he laid down his weary life in an Apulian castle, Frederick was in continual warfare with the Church. Had he lived, who knows how that struggle might have

ended, or by what devices the prince who was emperor as well as king, and had the prestige of the Holy Roman Empire at his back, might have met the dangers gathering round his kingdom? For the Pope was negotiating with other princes, offering them the inheritance of Naples if they would but turn the Hohenstaufens out; and at length, after an English prince had refused the enterprise, Charles of Anjou took it up, brother of St. Louis, and a man accounted the first warrior of his age. By this time the kingdom of the Two Sicilies had passed to Manfred, the favourite child of Frederick the Second, though born of an unlawful union. There was a child in Germany of lawful blood, one Conradin; but he was still playing with his mother, and of no age to stem the troubles of the kingdom. Moreover, he was reported dead, and Manfred seized the throne with the goodwill of the people, who loved him well, and keep his memory unto this day; for he was handsome and gallant, "Bello e biondo" the Apulians call him still, a king whom a man might follow and a woman love, and, but for the Pope and his restless enmity

Manfred also, like his father, might have made the happiness of a whole people.

But Charles of Anjou descended suddenly and met Manfred in battle outside Benevento. It was the twenty-sixth of February, in the year 1266. Manfred, watching the battle from a hillock, saw his troops waver; and suspecting treachery, which was indeed abroad that day, he rushed into the thickest of the fight, and was slain by an unknown hand as he strove to rally his Apulians.

That day there fell before the French spears not only a noble king, but the peace and happiness of southern Italy. Charles of Anjou was a grim and ruthless tyrant, whose conceptions of mercy and justice were those of a hawk hovering above a hen-coop. He denied burial to the body of his enemy, and caused it to be flung naked on the banks of the river, where every soldier as he passed cast a stone at it. He seized Manfred's luckless queen, Helena, and kept her prisoner with her children until death released them. He overthrew good laws and set up bad ones. He sought to stamp out loyalty to the old kings by exile and the sword. In Sicily

he wrought unutterable woe, such as in the end turned the blood of every islander to fire and his heart to stone, and produced a massacre from which no Frenchman escaped. All the world knows that great act of retribution by the name of the Sicilian Vespers.

But in the meantime Conradin had grown up to tall boyhood, and his heart was already brave enough to rage when he saw his kingdom in the hands of a cruel conqueror, and his own subjects slain and banished because they loved his house. His mother wept, but the boy did what any brave boy of kingly blood would do. I will tell the tale of that great tragedy later, when I reach the square outside the Carmine where the last scene was played out, and the boy-king lost the game, but carried all the honours with him from the world, leaving eternal infamy for a heritage to the foe who slew him.

So Charles of Anjou possessed the kingdom. But it brought no happiness to him or to his race. His own days were tortured by the loss of Sicily, and every one of those who followed him reigned uneasily. Even his grandson Robert, called "The Wise," is sus-

pected of having won the throne by murder. Robert's granddaughter, Queen Giovanna, whose sweet memory we found on the slopes of the Posilipo, was privy to the murder of her husband, and was herself smothered with a pillow. The other, Joanna, who followed her was the most profligate woman of her age, and in her ended, meanly and sordidly, the line of Anjou sovereigns.

Then came the House of Aragon, which had reigned in Sicily ever since the Vespers, and now expelled the last scion of Anjou and established a kingdom which seemed likely to be stable. But the claims of the royal house of France were only dormant; and before the end of the century they started up again, eager and adventurous, in the heart of the young King, Charles the Eighth. It was the wily Duke of Milan, Ludovic Sforza, named the Moor, who incited this young man to lead the French chivalry through the passes of the Alps. He was the warder of Italy, and he betrayed her. It would be hard to name any one act of man since God divided light from darkness which has let loose upon the world such tremendous consequences of woe.

It is not my duty here to describe those consequences, nor to tell how the French invasion resulted very shortly in riveting on Naples the long Spanish slavery, which in the middle of the last century became a monarchy again, and in 1860 was torn from the hold of the Bourbons, and made free at last, by the grace of God and the valour of true heroes, each one of whom dared all for Italy.

"Blessed is he of all men, being in one
As father to her and son,
Blessed of all men living, that he found
Her weak limbs bared and bound,
And in his arms and in his bosom bore,
And as a garment wore
Her weight of want, and as a royal dress
Put on her weariness.

"Praise him, O storm and summer, shore and wave,
O skies, and every grave;
O weeping hopes, O memories beyond tears,
O many and murmuring years."

I will quote no more, even of these immortal verses. Since it was given to an English singer to voice the rapture with which all good men hailed the salvation of

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my colazione in one which looks towards the sheer cliff of the Pizzofalcone, and from which towards my right I can look out upon the harbour, can catch a glimpse of the Castel Nuovo, the old royal dwelling of the Houses of Anjou and Aragon, and see beyond it the old city bathed in sunshine sloping to the curving sea.

The Pizzofalcone is the Falcon's Beak. If it were not too hot to think much about anything, I might perhaps detect the resemblance. But at this hour, in this city, and in face of this sun, one does not think; one sits and lets half realised ideas drift past as they will. The Pizzofalcone looks to me much like any other cliff, rather dangerously near the castle, which could easily be dominated from the height by even the smallest modern guns. There was once a villa of the Roman Lucullus on that height. Statesman and epicure, he had another on this island; or perhaps the two formed part of a single domain, which must have been rarely lovely in those days when waving pine trees filled the hollows of the cliff and the sea broke white and creamy on the strand of Santa Lucia.

It was not this handsome quay stretching on beyond the castle which set the Neapolitans singing—

"Oh, dolce Napoli,
Oh, suol beato."

For the truth is that modern works of engineering have not yet proved as prolific in poetry as the abuses they replace, and the Neapolitans have not written about their sea-wall any song one half so sweet as that which was inspired by the pretty, solitary creek outside the city walls, bad as it is understood to have been in morals. There were, and are still, caverns all along the cliffs of Santa Lucia which were sad places in the old day, full of riotous and evil people who resorted thither for the worst of ends. For this reason Don Pietro di Toledo, when he was Viceroy, ruined some and closed others, by which act he at once improved the morals of Naples and enriched its folklore, for nothing stimulated the imagination of the people so much as the idea that their caverns were lying empty and silent. They believe now that some are the haunt of witches, while others

are filled with treasure. One or two are worth seeing still if a guide can be found to show them.

But I sat down here to talk of tragedies connected with this castle. Some people may think it would be better to do so within and not without the walls, and they are welcome to their opinion; but I have tried both courses and think not. The interior of the castle is badly modernised. The custodian is stupid and knows nothing. The old chapel is a kitchen, and when I went to see the spot where the spirit of Queen Helena wrote the word "revenge" upon the altar I found it full of soldier cooks washing potatoes for the garrison. The prisons are either forgotten or not shown. Inside the walls there is nothing but disillusion and regret.

Queen Helena was the young wife of Manfred, who, as I said above, was slain at Benevento, defending his kingdom against the butcher, Charles of Anjou. The poor girl was at Lucera with her children, when they brought her news that her husband, kingdom, and home were all lost; and her first natural impulse was to flee to the protection of her

father, the Greek Emperor in Constantinople. So she took to horse, and rode down out of the hill country through the coast plains of Apulia, where but a few weeks earlier she had hunted and feasted with her lord, and so came to the port of Trani, where she had touched land and met the King in all the splendour of his retinue when she came from the east a happy bride. One can fancy with what fearfulness this little band of fugitives rode towards the sea, carrying with them the children of the slain King, and how often they must have turned their heads to watch lest they might see the spearpoints of Anjou flashing among the defiles of the mountains. At Trani surely they would find servants loyal enough to speed them on board ship before they cast themselves at the feet of the conqueror; and as she rode beneath the gateway of the whitewalled town and saw the Adriatic stretching far towards the shores of Greece the Queen's heart must have leapt amidst its sorrow at the thought that she had brought her dead lord's boys in sight of safety and of freedom.

Alas, poor Queen! The whole land was

turning like a flower to the sun! The Castellan of Trani spoke her fair. A month before he would have given all he had to gain her favour, and now—he did but beg her rest until a ship could be got ready, and instantly sent off tidings to the French. Ere morning mother and children were riding once more across the plain, their horses' heads turned from the sea, and their bridles guided by French hands. Neither the sorrow of the Queen nor the youth of the children touched the heart of Charles. He would have none of the blood of Manfred left in freedom, and Queen and children died after many years in prison.

Queen Helena was shut up in this castle for some years. Men say it was at Nocera that she died, but it must have been here that her noble spirit fretted most sorely against fate, bruising itself like a poor lark flapping against its prison bars. For in the corridors of this old castle her spirit used to walk on the eve of Ascension every year, pacing slowly from her cell to the chapel of the castle, where she wrote upon the altar the word "revenge" with finger dipped in

blood. Nothing could erase those letters till the night of the Sicilian Vespers, when the French were hunted and slain in every street and alley of Palermo. After that dread act of vengeance wrought in her own capital city, the spirit of Queen Helena was never seen again.

It is in sight of these grey walls, which stood here before Naples was a kingdom, certainly in the year 1140, that every pageant and almost every tragedy in the long story of the city has passed by. In those days when dukes ruled Naples, and the age of Greek dominion was but just over, the castle was called "Castello del Salvatore," the Castle of the Saviour, with the addition of the words "near Naples," for the old walled city which made such valorous defences lay beyond the ridge. Sometimes, again, it is spoken of as "Castello Marino," a name which sufficiently explains itself; but nowhere is its present designation used in ancient documents until the year 1352, when it appears in the rules of the Order of the Holy Spirit, founded by Louis of Anjou, and appears, moreover, not only as "the Castle

CASTEL DELL' OVO, PIZZOFALCONE AND SAN MARTINO, FROM THE SEA.

of the Egg," but as "the Castle of the Enchanted Egg," thus showing that the legend concerning the magical foundation of the fortress had gained strength enough to displace one, if not two, ancient titles, and attach itself inseparably to the spot.

There is in this fact something very singular; and one would willingly ask the dead centuries why they left us the heritage of this mysterious name. Of itself, the ancient castle must remain in all men's minds as the chief interest in Naples, the most marked object on its beautiful shore, and the central point of its romantic story. But beyond the beauty and the interest, one is piqued with curiosity; and the sense of mystery clinging to the castle lends it a charm to which no one can remain insensible. There are few points near Naples, whether on hillside or in valley, from which one does not see the enchanted castle low down by the water's edge, swept by cloud and sunshine, or wet with spray, when the storm wind drives along the shore, a witness of past ages, the one thing in Naples which has not changed, except only the blue sea and the contours of the everlasting hills.

No castle builder of the days when artillery had come into use would have set this fortress on the shore beneath the Pizzofalcone, whence it could be so easily bombarded. It is rather curious to sit under these old walls, and turn one's eyes in succession to the three castles of the city. This is much the oldest, and the least defensible. Then came Castel Nuovo, a little higher in the town; Charles of Anjou founded it; and lastly S. Elmo, high upon the hillside, in a perfect situation, of all others best suited to be the *arx*, or citadel. Why, one wonders, did not the first builders use it, and let the city grow around it? or at least, why did they not place their keep and fortress on the Pizzofalcone? an eminence well suited for defence. Surely those first Greek settlers who came across the hills from Cumæ could not have overlooked the merits of this site! Perhaps, as some scholars hold, Neapolis, "the new city," could not be built upon the Pizzofalcone because Palæopolis, "the old city," was already there. I cannot tell. There are no answers to these questions, which recur again and again as one wanders

VILLA DEL POPOLO AND CASTEL SANT' ELMO.

VILLA DEL POPOLO AND CASTEL
SANT' ELMO.

round these coasts, none the less absorbing because one must speculate on them in vain.

But in Naples one must not spend time in chasing shadows. I have still to speak about the French bombardment of the enchanted castle; but first I will take up the tale of the fall of the House of Aragon where I left it in my last chapter, when King Alfonso, terrified and broken by nameless fear, leapt down shuddering from his throne, and fled from royalty and kingdom, to die a penitent monk in a monastery in Sicily.

It was a well-nigh hopeless task for his son Ferdinand to maintain the sceptre thus hastily thrust into his hands. The French were already over the borders of his kingdom. They had stormed and sacked the Castle of Monte di San Giovanni, putting the garrison to the sword. "This," says Guicciardini with scornful bitterness, "was the sum of the opposition and trouble which the King of France met with in the conquest of a realm so noble and so splendid; in the defence of which there was shown neither skill, nor courage, nor good counsel, no desire for honour, no strength, no loyalty."

The Neapolitans were strongly posted at San Germano, the River Garigliano flowing like a moat in front, and their flanks guarded by lofty mountains; but they fled without a blow, before they even saw the French, leaving their guns behind, and falling back on Capua.

At Capua, that ancient city of delights, which turned the strong Carthaginian invaders into feeble voluptuaries, cowardice was fitly followed up by treachery. The troops were under command of Gianjacopo Triulzi, a captain of repute, "accustomed to make profession of honour," observes Guicciardini, in his dry, contemptuous way. This honourable captain seized the moment when his young master had been called back to Naples by disorders in the city, to deliver over his whole command to the French. Ferdinand hurried back; but arrived too late. He returned with a few followers to Naples. The whole city was in an uproar, the mob was already sacking the stables of the Castel Nuovo. There was no more hope of stemming the tide. The young king, brave, just, and personally popular, was overwhelmed

by the misdeeds of his house. The very guards of his palace were inclined to seize his person; but he distracted their attention by admitting them to sack the castle, and while they were quarrelling over their booty, he left the castle by the secret postern towards the sea, and embarked on a light galley bound for Ischia. There as he stood in the stern, and through the black smoke of the burning ships, destroyed by his orders, saw home and kingdom lost by the sins and dishonour of other men, he repeated over and over, as long as he could still see Naples, those words in which the psalmist tells us that except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

But the Castle of the Egg still held out for him, and the French, having seized a little tower on the height of Pizzofalcone, bombarded the fortress from that eminence. King Charles the Eighth himself was there watching the practice of his gunners, when two light galleys ran across from Ischia, touching shore at the old mole, and from one of them landed Don Federigo of Aragon, uncle of the King, who had dwelt at the French

Court, and knew both Charles and his barons. They took him up to the height, and when the French King saw him coming, says Passaro, that most gossipy of chroniclers, "he leapt down from his horse and bowed down to the ground, and embraced Don Federigo with the greatest pleasure, and took him by the hand and led him apart to a spot beneath an olive tree, where they began to talk together, but of what they said I know nothing, though many supposed that King Charles was trying to treat with King Ferdinand, offering him great lordships in France, but he would not, and Don Federigo left him and went back to his ships."

A strange interview, surely, between King and Prince, while the French gunners stood waiting with their matches burning, and the standard of Aragon still flew over the enchanted castle. It fell ere long, and the whole kingdom was in the hands of Charles. It is true he had not the wit to keep it. But anyone who wants to know that story must seek it in Guicciardini, and may live to thank me for referring him to one of the greatest and most interesting writers whom the world can show.

VIA FORIA AND THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

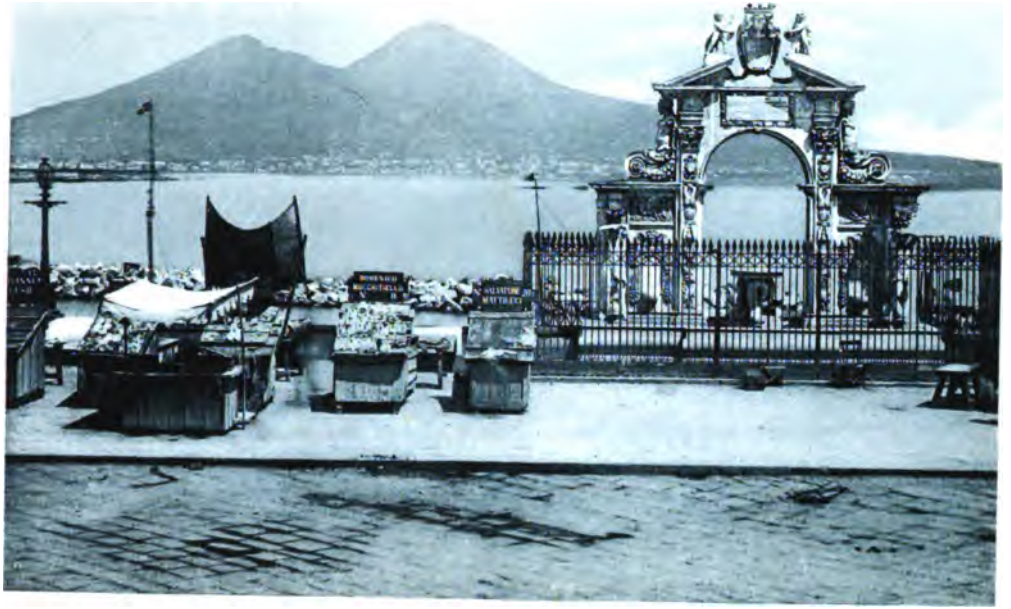
CHAPTER VI.

THE BARBARITIES OF FERDINAND OF ARAGON WITH CERTAIN OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH PRESENT THEMSELVES IN STROLLING ROUND THE CITY.

It is not possible to stroll along the sea-front much further than the Castle of the Enchanted Egg, because the inclosures of the arsenal occupy the foreshore. Thus the only course open is to turn inland, and, retracing one's steps a little, to pass up beneath the shadow of the great cliff of the Pizzofalcone into the Strada Santa Lucia, which has always borne the fame of exhibiting at a glance more of the highly coloured, if uncleanly, life of the poorer Neapolitans than any other district of the city. I suspect its proximity to the hotels had something to do with this high reputation, for crowded as the winding roadway is at times with fishermen and peasant women, there is, I maintain, incomparably more of uncivilised and ancient Naples to be

seen in the Strada de'Tribunali, or around Castel Capuano, than is now presented to the eyes of the astonished visitor in Santa Lucia. However, the wide pavement on the side of that highway which opens towards the sea—for the famous creek is filled up now—is at all times a standing place for booths, chiefly for the sale of the "frutti del mare," edible or not; and there one may see both young girls and ancient hags proffering their wares with clamorous pertinacity, making use of a vocabulary which is piquant, if not sweet, and soaring up into howls such as only a Neapolitan throat can execute.

The charm of Santa Lucia is largely of the past. Naples is suffering a change; and at this point one realises for the first time that the old city of dirt and laughter is being swept and garnished. The "piano di risanamento," that much-needed scheme of resanitation which was conceived in Naples after the dread outbreak of cholera had scourged the narrow alleys in a way to make the most careless people think—that great conception of broad streets to be driven through the crowded quarters, letting the sweet and heal-



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ing sea air course to and fro between the houses, has brought health and may bring cleanliness, but it seems to be expelling gaiety and picturesqueness with the mephitic vapours which have wrought such woe. Naples may be an idle city still, but it is not so idle. It is disorderly and not too safe, yet is more reputable than it was. The rake is contemplating better things, and by-and-by may actually achieve them—an anticipation over which good men must rejoice. But visitors who come to play may lament the increase of seriousness and the vanishing faith that life begins and ends with laughter.

A traveller approaching Naples from this side must needs be struck by the narrowness of the close alleys which pierce the houses of Santa Lucia. Standing in the middle of any one of these vicoli, a man might easily touch both house-fronts, while the walls tower up so high on either hand that only a mere strip of sky is visible, and that with effort. No breeze but one which blew directly on the mouth of these alleys could reach the windows of the dense population which inhabits them. Disease stalks unim-

peded, beyond the power of science to restrain. The reason for building these lines of houses so close together was, of course, to secure shade, that priceless blessing throughout the burning dog days in southern Italy. No man can have strolled about Italian towns even in fine spring weather without feeling grateful for the shadows which fall on him from some overhanging house-front. Under shelter from the sun the very smells seem less; and in August scarce any price in health may appear too high to pay for a patch of shade which lasts throughout the day.

The curved roadway of Santa Lucia mounts the hill on which the kings of Anjou, having resolved to take up their residence in Naples rather than in Palermo, which was the former capital of the Two Sicilies, built their new castle—Castel Nuovo—still a fortress, though untenable in modern war. This eminence lay outside the city then. Centuries later the town had not absorbed it, and the castle on the knoll remained surrounded by vineyards and the palaces of those princes of the blood who were entitled

to dwell in the immediate neighbourhood of the King. Eastwards lay the city, much as one may see it now, filling the hollow of the coast and stretching some way up a hill.

The royal palace, which stands now upon the right, hiding the front of the Castel Nuovo, is of course a modern building. It has no beauty, and I have naught to say concerning it. The handsome piazza laid out before the palace is a pleasant place to stroll in, especially on warm evenings when the lights are glittering and there is music at Gambrinus' Café at the corner. But it has no special interest, and I go on therefore round the corner of the piazza, past the halting-place of tramcars, past the little garden of the palace and the colonnade of the San Carlo Theatre, till I reach the Piazza del Municipo, where a gateway in the long wall admits to the castle precinct. Admission is free. The sentry at the gate merely nods when I declare my business to be curiosity and nothing more, and leaves me to stroll unchecked up the ascending causeway till I enter the quadrangle of the castle, where a squad of soldiers are drilling awkwardly.

It is strange that many visitors to Naples omit this castle from the sights they see. It is well to spend hours and days in the museum and aquarium, or in wandering from church to church, spoilt as is almost every one among those sacred buildings by the corrupt taste of the eighteenth century, which daubed over noble gothic arches with unmeaning Barocco ornament, and left Naples degraded among Italian cities by the loss of almost all that was once done nobly within her walls in stone or marble. But here is the very fount and centre of the sovereignty of Naples, the home of all its kings since Manfred, the Palace of Anjou and Aragon. In these walls their secrets were deposited, and some to this day remain open to the curious. Here was the chief theatre of their pomp, and here, on the knoll above the shore among the olive groves and orchards that fringed the city walls, unnumbered tragedies occurred.

The castle has two courtyards. The portal leading from the outer to the inner is dignified by what is probably the finest piece of building now left in Naples, the triumphal

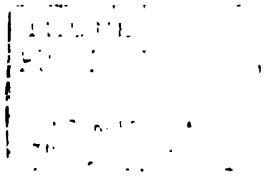
arch erected by Alphonso of Aragon—first of the two kings who bore that name—to celebrate his conquest of the city and the downfall of the last adherents of the old House of Anjou. "Pious, merciful, unconquered:" such were the terms in which his character was described upon the arch beneath which he rode in and out in triumph. Mercy was an attribute uncommon in his family; of that all men can judge unto this day. Piety is estimated differently from age to age. In monarchs, at least of mediæval times, it was a virtue of outward observance, and in this Alfonso did perhaps excel. As for the third merit which he claimed, it is not on record that anyone tried to conquer him, except the barons of the kingdom, who were suppressed with a ruthless cruelty which forecast the tyranny of his son and grandson, who wrought the deed of terror in the Church of San Lionardo on the Chiaia.

The archway is chiefly the work of Pietro di Martino of Milan, though it is said that Giuliano da Majano also laboured on it, if not others also. It possesses a noble pair of bronze doors of even greater interest than the

archway; for not only is their workmanship extremely fine, but also the figures possess the interest of portraiture. The scenes depicted are the triumphs of King Ferdinand, second of the five monarchs of Aragon, over his revolting barons. There is Ferdinand upon his warhorse talking to the Duke of Taranto, his thin, cruel face recognisable at a glance by the high nose which he derived from his father, King Alfonso, builder of the arch. In the medallions of the door the same sharp face appears; while his son, afterwards Alfonso the Second, bears a shorter, thicker face, which is suggestive, though very falsely, of more kindness.

Let us go into the castle and see what remains there to explain the reputation of inhuman cruelty which history has conferred on these kings. A small boy armed with keys is already hovering about expectant; and though it is his purpose to show only the Chapel of Santo Barbara, the slightest hint of a desire to see the subterranean chamber will cause him to lead you through the sacristy, where he will produce a couple of candle ends, and throw open a small doorway

ARCH OF TRIUMPH IN HONOUR OF ALFONSO D'ARAGONA, CASTEL NUOVO.



hidden in the wall. A winding stair of perhaps twenty steps conducts to a little chamber, faintly lighted by a deep-set window. At first the room seems empty, but as one's eyes adjust themselves to the dim light four coffins become visible, each lying on a shelf, two open and two closed.

Surely, one thinks, this must be a place of private sepulture for the Royal Family or for their servants, and the stair giving access from the chapel was built for the convenience of mourners who wished to stand beside their dead. But the boy, with a chuckle of amusement, lifts the lid of one of the closed coffins. Within lies the mummy of a man, fearfully distorted by his agony, his cramped hands clutched desperately, as if fighting with all his strength against those who held him down. His mouth is contorted, his whole body heaving with a last struggle for life and breath. The man was strangled, there can be no doubt of it; and there he lies to this hour, fully clothed in the garments which he wore when he came down that little winding stair, hose, buttons, and doublet still intact.

Each of the other coffins contains the body of a man slain in his clothes, the head separated, and lying by the shoulders.

Who were these men, and how has it happened that they lie here all together? What made mummies of them, and with what object were their bodies preserved? The answer must be sought in history. The *Diario Ferrarese*, printed by Muratori, tells us that "it was the constant habit of King Ferdinand and King Alfonso, when their enemies, whether barons or people, had fallen into their hands, to cut off their heads and keep them salted in chambers underneath their palace." Not content with having dismissed the spirits of their foes to another world, these kingly Aragons must needs have, close by the scene of their continual sports and labours, so many secret pleasure chambers into which they could withdraw at leisure moments and gaze in rapture on the very features of the enemy whose turbulence was stilled and whose wits would never be turned against his king again. Doubtless these visits renewed the joy of killing!

So in this chamber where King Alfonso

or his father stood and gloated, one may stand to-day and look down on the same bodies still unmoved—a strange step back into the Middle Ages, and a more revealing glimpse than any other known to me of what Naples was in old days, when its kings —yes, even the best of them!—were tigers, and the seeds were sown of that contempt for life which is to this hour a chief difficulty of those who govern Naples. Who were these men? Surely, one thinks, their rank and importance must be measured by the care with which the King bestowed their bodies in such close neighbourhood to the royal chapel and to his own apartments!

Probably we shall not miss the truth by very much if we conclude them to be some among those barons of the kingdom who, incensed by the harsh government of Ferdinand, and furious beyond all measure with his more hateful son, gave rein to their old affection for the House of Anjou, and conspired with the Pope to confer the realm on a prince of that royal house. It seems strange that even under the afflictions of the Aragon sovereignty men should have looked back on

the days of Anjou with affection. But the fact is that Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, whose power as the eldest son of the aged King grew stronger daily, was such a ruler as must needs rouse regrets for other days even in a patient generation, much more in one so proud and turbulent as the Neapolitans. Harshness and cruelty they understood; but Alfonso did what no nation will endure. He took the women, even of the noblest houses, at his will. Of this came unquenchable hatred, and in the end the ruin of his house.

The conspiracy was a terrible one. Half the great officers of the kingdom were involved in it, and King Ferdinand knew not where to look for loyalty. The Prince of Salerno, Lord High Admiral of the realm, and the Prince of Bisignano were among the leaders—members both of that great family of San Severino, whose palace is known to every visitor as the Church of the Gesù Nuovo. The Grand Constable, the Grand Seneschal, the King's Secretary—there was no end to the men of note and consequence who joined in the appeal to the Pope to dethrone the tyrants of the House of Aragon, and give

the kingdom to René of Lorraine, last descendant of the ancient kings.

Ferdinand was a prince whose sagacity is extolled by all men. He was wise as is the serpent. His statesmanship was of the type made widely known twenty years later by Cæsar Borgia, and in this emergency he practised the same arts as enabled that accomplished dissimulator to strangle his four chief enemies at once. The two occasions deserve close study from those who would understand the statecraft of the fifteenth century. Each was indeed a masterpiece of that art which Machiavelli calls "virtù" and it is difficult to decide where to award the palm.

Ferdinand negotiated. It was indeed his only course, for time must be gained at any cost. This was in the regular routine of kings in difficulty. De Comines, in a memorable passage, explains how useful it is to send ambassadors to meet one's enemies; they see so much even while they are treating. Ferdinand negotiated with such skill, such open frankness and goodwill, showed such a broad and merciful spirit, and was so ready to forgive, that the conspirators, who

had waited in vain for their new king, accepted the accord and returned sullenly to their castles, doubting and fearing sorely.

"Let no man think that present kindnesses lead to the forgetting of past injuries," says Machiavelli, laying bare the roots of human nature in his incisive way. To do them justice, the barons supposed no such thing. The Prince of Salerno was missing one fine morning. On the gateway of his palace was a card, on which were inscribed the mystic words—"Passero vecchio non entra in caggiola" (An old sparrow does not go into the cage). He is said to have got out of the city disguised as a muleteer. Other sparrows were less prudent or more unfortunate. The cage doors were wide open, and the King and Duke sat piping so prettily that any bird might have thought it safe to flutter in. Towards the Count of Sarno Ferdinand showed particular affection. His son Marco Coppola was betrothed to the daughter of the Duke of Amalfi, the King's nephew. The wedding was at hand. It must be held in the Royal Palace, in Castel Nuovo, if only to mark the royal favour. There were great

THE CASTEL DELL' OVO.

festivities. The pomp of the Court was boundless. But the wedding garments which the King was preparing were not of this world. Midway in the feastings and the music, when all men were confident and careless, the stroke fell. How, one wonders, did Ferdinand and Alfonso look at that moment when, sitting at the head of the tables, gazing down upon their guests, bridegroom and bride and relatives trusting in the royal honour, they gave the signal and called in the soldiers who turned that feast to terror? How did the guests look when the guard went round arresting every man of mark or consequence within the hall? Surely since Belshazzar was King in Babylon no feast has been broken up more awfully!

The craft and treachery of this great stroke fixed once for all the reputation of Ferdinand and Alfonso. The nice taste of Renaissance Italy revolted, giving voice to loud condemnation. King and Prince, surprised at the outcry, paused, and held back the secret executioner. It would be safer to have a show of justice; so a court was nominated, the prisoners were tried, and when they had been

despatched from the world in this unexceptionable manner, one by one the other dukes and barons were caught and led into the secret pleasure chambers, whence they never more emerged. The Prince of Bisignano, the Duke of Melfi, the Duke of Nardo, counts and knights innumerable disappeared. Their children and their wives were treated in like manner. Few escaped; but for many a day Neapolitans told the tale how Bandella Gaetano, Princess of Bisignano, a woman of high courage and resource, fled with her young children to the Church of San Lionardo in the Chiaia; and there, profiting by the old fame of the saint as the guardian of fugitives, bribed a boatman to take her on to Terracina, and so sought refuge with the Colonnas. Ferdinand would have given much to stamp out the brood; and had he been able to turn the pages of the book of fate he would have given even more.

What happened to the prisoners was never known. For some time the fiction was kept up that they were alive, and food was even sent daily to their cells, set down perhaps beside the salted bodies in mockery. But the

executioner was seen wearing a gold chain which had belonged to the Prince of Bisignano; and ere long it was known that every one was dead.

There is no doubt that in these awful days the Church of San Lionardo was filled with fugitives. It was there that Alfonso wrought that nameless deed of terror which dwelt so heavily upon his conscience as to destroy his nerves and send him fleeing from the kingdom. We have seen what things his conscience would endure; perhaps it is as well we remain in ignorance of what it would not. But if we argue from the known to the unknown we may form a surmise of the nature of that act which is enough to banish sleep, and may well make us grateful that the walls of that old sanctuary which concealed so terrible a secret stand no longer on the smiling shore which is the chosen parade of Neapolitan society of our own day.

There are two chapels in the castle, one opening from the other; but both lost whatever beauty they once had by the deplorable passion for Barocco, which wrought such evil in Naples. Two great beauties still remain,

though not inside the chapels. One is the doorway, a lovely work of Giuliano da Majano, mercifully left untouched, I know not by what happy chance; the other is a winding staircase behind the choir, consisting of a hundred and fifty-eight steps, each formed of a single block of travertine, and so arranged that their inward edges form a perfect cylinder. There is no end to the scenes of history and tragedy which are recalled by these old walls and chambers, in which the hottest passions of life in Naples have spent themselves so often, even from the first coming of Charles of Anjou down to the creation of the Parthenopean Republic, when Nelson received the surrender of the Revolutionists, driven to despair by the arrival of his fleet. But these are tales which visitors must find out for themselves. If they will not go to Castel Nuovo on the inducement which I have given them, neither will they if I should write a volume.

When I emerge from the old palace fortress I hesitate, being, in truth, half inclined to turn directly to the Carmine, the strongest point of interest in Naples. But a man will

fail to comprehend the relation of the Carmine to ancient Naples if he goes to it by the broad street along the quays which lay outside the mediæval city. It is better to plunge into the maze of narrow ways which still, unto this hour, retain the general aspect of the city wherein Boccaccio rambled, picking up in I know not what haunt of roysterers those sad tales which beguile one yet in the pages of the *Decameron*. Who has not read of the nocturnal adventures of Andreuccio, who came from Pisa to Naples to buy horses with twenty gold florins in his pocket? Who would not wish to see the very lanes through which he wandered naked in the night? Who has not felt the charm of that naïve irresponsibility which pervades the tales of Naples in old days? Does it still exist? Are the narrow lanes athrob even now on summer nights with the thrumming of the lute, with the patter of girls' feet, made musical by wafts of song blown down from lofty windows?

"Flower of the rose,
If I've been merry, what matter who knows?"

Well, let us go and see; and first we will turn up the Toledo, now rechristened "Via Roma," that long straight street which the Viceroy Don Pietro di Toledo made without the city wall, and which is still the chief artery of life and fashion.

The narrow vista, made picturesque by hanging balconies and green shutters, is bathed in sunshine—not the fierce glare which even in early summer brings out the awnings used to convert the footways into shaded corridors, but the pleasant golden glow of an early Eastertide, carrying with it the reek of violets and early roses. It is no wonder that the street is odorous of flowers; for at any corner a few soldi will buy them by the handful, fresh and dewy, redolent of summer, though indeed summer never flees far from this sunny coast, and even in mid-winter she will slip back for a while, bringing golden days. It is on the stroke of noon, noon of Holy Thursday, and in another hour the roadway will be closed to vehicles. For on this day, by custom old enough to be respectable, the Neapolitans go on foot to visit the sepulchres of Christ in the churches, com-

bining this exercise of devotion with the more worldly solaces of friendship and social intercourse. There was a time when princesses came down and mingled with the throng, the royal ladies of the House of Bourbon going to and fro on foot; while the rustling of their long dresses of black silk gave the ceremony its picturesque title of "Lu Struscio." There being no princesses in Naples now, the old ceremony has lost some of its attractions for the nobly born; but it is still honoured, and already the carriages are growing thin, while in every part of the long street men armed with long brooms are reducing the whole width to the same state of cleanliness as the footpaths. With the disappearance of the vetturino a blessed peace steals down upon the air. This is, I should suppose, the one day in the year on which a man can hear himself speak in the Via Roma. But Naples, passionate for noise, is never long without it. Fast as the vetturini go the hawkers come, hoarse and raucous; men with strings of chestnuts, boys holding tiny Java sparrows on their fingertips, women thrusting at you trays of "pas-

tiere," without which no good citizen of Naples would dream of passing Easter, any more than he would go through Christmas without "capitoni." It is rarely wise to apply to local delicacies any other test than that of sight. The women push past me with their trays, knowing well that their market does not lie among the strangers. Meantime the Via Santa Brigida, which crosses the Via Roma, has broken out into a jungle of standing booths, on which are displayed proudly cheap playthings for the children, sweatmeats and other paschal joys, mingled with combs, shirtings, and suchlike useful articles, to which attention is drawn by huge placards.

OCCASIONE!
FERMATEVI! TASTATE! GIUDICATE!

while the seething crowd which hustles round the stalls is animated by any but a feeling of devotion.

So the throng gathers, till by-and-by the Via Roma is a sea of moving heads. The church doors stand wide open, of itself an unusual sight in Naples, where the churches are closed at noon, and reopen only for an

hour in the evening. Their doorways are curtained heavily in black, and beneath the hanging folds a ceaseless stream of people are passing in and out, pressing forward to where the recumbent figure of our Lord lies at the foot of a blazing trophy of flowers and wax lights, kissing the contorted limbs fervently, then hurrying away. A large proportion of these devotees are dressed in black, especially the older women, but among them are many who seem more anxious to display their bright spring toilettes, and the crowded street assumes the aspect of a drawing-room, in which greetings and laughing salutations fly freely on all hands. It is all picturesque enough, and a relic of old life in Naples which is worth seeing. In the absence of the usual street noises, in the solemn trappings of the churches, and yet more in the tramp of crowds so largely clad in mourning, there is not wanting a suggestion of funeral pomp; and as I stand apart and watch the throng go by, there comes into my mind the memory of a solemn procession which once came down this famous highway, bearing to the grave the body of a lad whom the city, by the

strangest freak, had raised in one day from the lowest to the highest station, and cast down as suddenly into a bloody grave, one who had enough heroism in his ignorant mind to resent oppression, and might—who knows?—have proved an earlier Garibaldi, had he been supported by the nobles. It was Mas'aniello who was thus borne dead down the slope of the Toledo, honoured by the weeping people who were little likely to find another leader bold enough to head them, honoured even by the Church, which never refuses outward show of honour to the men she has destroyed. First came a hundred boys of the conservatorio of Loreto, then all the brothers of the monasteries, to the number of four hundred, and then the body of the fisherman dictator, wrapped in a white shroud folded so that all might see the head—I hope it had not that hideous look of death and anguish from which one shrinks on seeing the wooden model in the museum of San Martino! After the bier walked great crowds of Mas'aniello's followers, those ragamuffin soldiers who but a few days earlier had stormed down this street in triumph, sacking and destroying where they pleased.

Now they walked mournfully and slow, as well they might, for liberty lay upon the bier they followed, and the Spanish tyranny was about to close over them again. Behind them trailed their flags, and they marched to the soft beat of muted drums all hung with crape. But last of all came those who made this great procession memorable beyond all others. The soldiers were followed by a countless throng of women of the people. Out of every lane and alley of the swarming city they had come to bid farewell to their defender, to the one man who in many generations had dared to show them that they were not worms. Many of them carried lighted candles, weeping bitterly as they went slowly by; while others sang in tearful voices the "Santissimo Rosario," in trust that the brave soul of the departed might find peace.

So through this outskirt of the city the funeral train of Mas'aniello came from the Carmine and went back to that centre of the life and tragedy of Naples. We too will go there presently, and then will talk the more about Mas'aniello. But first we must walk

through the ancient city, and that is now quite close at hand. I have traversed almost half the length of the Toledo—the ancient name comes more readily than the modern—passing by the little Largo della Carità, where in the shadow of the tramcars green bays hang around the tablet that protests against forgetfulness of Felice Cavallotti. I am in sight of the Piazza Dante, and a little more would show me the red walls of the museum, when I halt beneath the vast and heavy front of the Palazzo Maddaloni, and turning round into the shadow of the Strada Quercia, I see the fine courtyard and loggia of the palace, eloquent of pomps and ceremonies which find no match in the Naples of to-day. Some hundred and fifty yards beyond the palace the old line of the city walls crossed the street at right angles. There is not a sign of walls or towers now. The ancient quadrangle of streets and alleys, the old Greek city which held out so stoutly generation after generation when besieged by Lombard or Imperialist, lies open now to strangers of every nation. On entering its precinct one appears to have found a new world, albeit an

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THE STRADA SANTA LUCIA AND THE CASTEL DELL' OVO.

unsavoury one. For here, in place of the irregular and curved vistas in which the builders of modern Naples have delighted, is a long narrow street of exceeding straightness, cleaving like an arrow flight through the close-packed houses. Irresistibly it brings to mind the long straight streets of Pompeii, so far as a thoroughfare seething with crowded life can recall one which lies silent and open under the winds of heaven. It is a just comparison; for indeed Pompeii still retains the very aspect which Naples must have borne. In size, in manner of construction, in defences, the two towns were closely similar, and this long street which under several names pierces the ancient city from side to side, was one of the three Decuman ways which every visitor to the buried city traces out and follows. A little higher up the hill is the Decumanus Major, now called the Strada de' Tribunali, and still by far the most interesting street in Naples, while higher yet upon the slope the third of the Decuman streets runs parallel to the other two under the name of Strada Anticaglia, and in it stood the ancient theatre, some remnants of which still exist

between the Vico di S. Paolo and the Vico de' Giganti. These three Decuman streets are the arteries of ancient Naples. In them, and in the countless alleys which unite them, are to be found almost all the relics of the mediæval city; and indeed a man wandering about beneath those unmodernised house-fronts, elbowing his way through crowds of ragged peasants and of burly priests, might well doubt in what century he found himself, so unlike the scene is to the trim world which he has known elsewhere.

But these are quarters in which it is not prudent to wander when the night is falling. Naples is not a safe city, and travellers would do wisely to realise the fact. Even in broad daylight caution and good sense are needed more than in most other cities. Ladies will show it by removing from their dress all ornaments of the slightest value, and men by refusing absolutely all inducements to enter houses, whether offered by small boys professing to find sacristans—a not uncommon trick—or by any other person not known and vouched for. After dark, if a man must walk alone, he should walk carefully on the

light side of the street and restrain any curiosity he may feel to see the effect of moonlight on the houses until he can watch it safely from his own window. These are not unnecessary cautions. Neapolitans themselves do not neglect them, though strangers do; and many have found cause to regret it. I myself, while walking with a lady in the immediate neighbourhood of the cathedral, have seen her caught by the waist by a burly brute and shaken as a dog shakes a terrier in the effort to unclasp a handsome silver buckle which she wore. The rascal failed, and was gone again before he could be seized. But the experience is one which few men would desire their wives or sisters to undergo. Complaint is useless. It is even doubtful whether, in a city where almost every robber has a knife, worse things may not happen to those who meet such attacks in the customary English manner. But the remedy is simple. Carry nothing which is of any obvious value. Avoid unnecessary conversation with poor boys, who are not safe guides. Go home while it is still light. With these plain rules men and women equally may ex-

plore the recesses of old Naples with pleasure and with almost perfect safety.

It is out of these teeming quarters, packed with a population as dense and fetid as that of Seven Dials, that the Camorra, the great secret society of Naples, drew the strength and vigour which enables it still to defy the law. There would be no exaggeration in saying that hardly a full generation has passed by since in all the lower quarters of the city the Camorra ruled with an audacity so high that there was neither man nor woman, boy nor girl, who did not know he must obey it rather than the law. The law was blind and deaf. The Camorra had eyes and ears in every vicolo and every cellar. It discovered all things; it struck heavily and secretly at those who tried to thwart it. A fruitseller who resisted payment of dues to the Camorrist would find his custom disappear. Accident upon accident would happen to his goods. Ere long he would be a ruined man. The Camorra might accept his submission, if proffered humbly and accompanied by a fine; but any active resistance, any communication with the police, would be

repaid by a knife thrust in the stomach some dark night. Fishermen, street hawkers, vetturini, guides—all were under the thrall of the ruthless organisation, all paid tribute in return for its protection, and executed its orders without remorse.

So far as is known to outsiders, the aims of the Camorra—which still exists, and wields considerable power yet—were not mainly political, though it was certainly at one time a powerful engine in the hands of those who desired the return of the Bourbons. That desire, once passionate in Naples, has almost died away. Francis the Second is dead, and there is none who can breathe life into the dry bones of his party. If the devotion to the old Royal House exists, it is kept alive by the exertions of the priests, who would make a hero of Apollyon if he came down on earth and showed a disposition to unseat the present king. The lower orders are still as clerical as in the days of Mas'aniello. Turbulent and fierce as are their passions, they are capable of high devotion; and a spiritual ruler who exerted the whole influence of the Church might turn them into a great people.

But here too, as at every turn in Italy, the task of government is checked and hampered by the hostility of Church and Crown. No foreigner can appreciate the chances of this struggle, or even apportion fairly blame between the combatants. It is enough for those of us who love Italy to sit and watch the unrolling of the future, lamenting that from the outset of her career as a united nation she has been wrestling with a Church whose traditions lie in the humbling of emperors and kings.

CHAPTER VII.

CHIEFLY ABOUT CHURCHES WITH SOME SAINTS, BUT MORE SINNERS.

He who will see the churches of Naples must rise betimes, since ancient custom closes them, for unknown reasons, from eleven o'clock till four. Some say the poor man will get nothing for his pains. But this is not so. It is indeed impossible that sacred buildings in a city so old and famous as Naples should be devoid of interest. Here, as elsewhere, they reflect the strong emotions of the citizens, their sorrows and their aspirations; and though it is true that many a once noble building has been daubed over with unmeaning ornament so freely that one has trouble in discovering the pure taste with which the builders wrought it, yet there is not a church in Naples which does not set vibrating some chord either of beauty or poignant association. No man can know the city or its peo-

ple if he neglect the churches. Past and present jostle each other perpetually there, and the effigies of kings look down with fine grave eyes on the filthy peasant women lifting up their children to kiss the feet of the dead Christ.

I have paused in the Strada Quercia opposite the Gesù Nuovo, once, as I have said before, the palace of the San Severini, Princes of Salerno. It was on that fine doorway that the Prince affixed the inscription "An old sparrow does not enter into the cage," as he stood beneath his ancestral gateway listening for the mule team with its jingling bells which gave him his chance of life and safety. Perhaps he waited under this old archway till he saw the beasts with highpiled burdens coming up this way from the Mercato, and slipped in silently among the swarthy knaves who led them, and so forth from the city and away to France, where he hatched a scheme of vengeance which destroyed the King, his enemy. The tinkling of those mule-bells as they went up this narrow street in the night fell on no ears that heeded them, yet in truth and earnest they were ringing the dirge of the House of Aragon.

INTERIOR OF CHURCH OF JESUS.

The interior of the Gesù is among those which arouse the citizens of Naples to enthusiasm. It is not without grandeur, but overdecorated, and on my mind it leaves but little sense of pleasure.

But from this archway where I stand I can see a church far older and more interesting, one indeed which yields in fame to none in Naples. It is Santa Chiara, whose dignified façade rears itself with twin towers in the cool shadow of the courtyard, a name famous not only in the ecclesiastical history of Naples, but in the legal also, having given its title to a great body of state councillors which once met here. It was the royal chapel of King Robert the Wise, third among the monarchs of his house, and the only prosperous one out of the whole number, though even he was pursued by sorrows, and by remorse too, unless the constant suspicions of the centuries have erred.

For the tale goes that Robert knew better than any other the cause of that sudden illness which carried off his elder brother, Charles Martel, King of Hungary, when, towards the close of their father's life, he

came to Naples to arrange for the succession. Stories of mediæval poisonings are to be received with caution. No man who glances round Naples to-day, swept and garnished as it has been by advancing science, will find it hard to understand how swiftly disease may —nay, must have struck in those crowded dirty streets six centuries ago. Yet Robert was believed to have seized the throne by fratricide. This Church of Santa Chiara was his atonement for the crime, and by its high altar he sleeps for ever, robed as a monk and throned as a king, beneath a monument of rare beauty, on which Petrarch wrote the jingling epitaph, "Cernite Robertum, regem virtute refertum."

"Chock full of virtue." Such was Petrarch's judgment on King Robert dead, and doubtless he believed it, for the King's Court was splendid, poets and scholars were held in honour, and Florentines especially. Innocent or guilty, Robert ruled with a magnificence which makes his reign the one bright spot in the troubled history of the Anjou sovereigns; and posterity, which has little good to say of any of them, remembers grate-

fully that he procured the laurel crown for Petrarch, and gave his protection to that rake Boccaccio.

Let us go in and see his church. It is rectangular, and has no aisles, while a long range of chapels upon either hand recall irresistibly the quirk recorded of King Robert's son, when his father, proud of the progress which the church was making, brought him in to admire its fair proportions. The graceless lad gazed round, and it struck him that the chapels were not unlike so many mangers. So when the King pressed him for his opinion he remarked airily that the church reminded him of a stable, whereupon the King said angrily, "God grant, my son, that you be not the first to eat in those stalls!"

It was a prophetic speech, and one which must have returned many times on the King's memory, for the historian Giannone assures us that the first train of royal mourners who entered the new church were following the coffin of this very lad, King Robert's first-born, and the hope of the realm.

The chief artist selected to adorn Santa Chiara with frescoes was no other than the

great Florentine, Giotto. Petrarch, Boccaccio, Giotto! How the best brains of Tuscany flocked to Naples in those days! The explanation of it was, apart from the natural attractions of a splendid Court, that when Charles of Anjou defeated and slew Manfred, he cast down by that act, and ruined throughout Italy, the party of Ghibellines, the Emperor's men, of whom Manfred, son of a great emperor, was naturally head. The Guelfs, the Pope's men, returned to Florence, whence they had been banished, and straightway the closest ties sprang up between the city on the Arno and the city of the siren, so close that the money bags of Florence saved Charles from ruin at least once.

So Tuscan poets and artists making the weary ten days' journey were assured that on the shores of the blue gulf they would find compatriots. Giotto came most gladly, and in the chapels of Santa Chiara he painted many scenes of Bible story, all of which were daubed over with whitewash by order of a Spanish officer a century and a half ago. He complained that they made the Church dark. There is indeed one fresco left in the old re-

fectory, now a shop. But Crowe and Cavalcaselle do not accept it as the work of the same hand.

So here, in the large, cool church, Giotto painted for many a day, alternating his labours perhaps with visits to Castel dell'Uovo, where he painted the chapel, now a smoky, useful kitchen! King Robert loved the man, so shrewd and cogent was his talk, and often came to chat with him in one place or the other. "If I were you, Giotto, I should stop painting now it is so hot," observed the King. "So should I, if I were you," returned the artist dryly. And one day, wishing perhaps to warn Robert by how frail a tenure he held his throne, he painted an ass stooping under one pack saddle and looking greedily towards another lying at his feet. Both saddles were adorned with crowns, and the explanation was that the ass typified the Neapolitans, who thought any other saddle better than the one they bore.

The most beautiful works of art in Santa Chiara, if not indeed in the whole city, are the eleven small reliefs which run as a frieze along the organ gallery. The scenes are from

the life of St. Katherine, martyr as well as saint. Dignified and tender, wrought with the rarest delicacy, yet inspired with astonishing vigour, the graceful figures are in white relief upon a ground of black. Very memorable and lovely they appear, rebuking the corrupt taste which has begotten so much base ornament in Naples.

Next to this frieze the interest of Santa Chiara lies in its monuments, for in this Royal Chapel of Anjou many children of that house were buried. The King himself assumed the frock of a Franciscan monk before his death, craving for a peace which he did not find upon his throne, and lies recumbent therefore, attired humbly in his habit, while on a higher story of the monument he sits enthroned in all his earthly splendour, gazing down upon his church with those keen features which were characteristic of his house, the thin hooked nose, not unlike a vulture's beak, so strangely like that which one sees on the coins of his grandfather, murderer of Conradin. Uneasy were the lives of all the monarchs of that house; their throne was set in blood, and in blood it was perpetually slipping.

I left Santa Chiara by the northern door, which opens on a handsome double staircase descending to the courtyard. In this wide space there is fine shadow, and, by contrast with the noisy street outside, the square is almost silent—a wondrous thing in Naples! Across the court, beside the archway by which I entered, rises the noble campanile, once planned on Gothic lines, but interrupted by the death of King Robert, and finished two centuries and a half later by an architect who transformed it into the classic style. There are mean houses all around, occupied by people who care not one jot for King Robert or his lost design.

Down the incline of the courtyard, where Boccaccio may well have whispered guilty secrets to his Anjou princess, there loafs a hawker with his donkey, his head thrown back, his brown hat tilted picturesquely, bawling with iron throat the praises of his leeks and cabbages, while the donkey creeps on cautiously over the broken stones. In the Neapolitan speech he is the "padulano"—the man who comes from the swamp, by which is meant the low plain of the Sebeto,

that muddy river which the railway to Castellammare crosses on the outskirts of the city. On this marshy ground grow quantities of early vegetables, and these it is which the padulano goes vaunting in his brazen voice. He needs his strength of lung, for see! on the highest story a woman has heard his bawling and comes out upon her balcony. At that height they do not bargain in words, but in signs, the universal language of the people. A few rapid passes of the hands and the business is done. The woman lets down a basket by a rope; a few soldi are jingling in the bottom; the basket goes up packed with green stuff, and the padulano loafs on beside his patient donkey.

It is in these crowded quarters of the ancient city, these streets through which the noisy, swarthy, dirty people were seething just as they are now when Pompeii was a peopled town and the hawkers went up and down the streets of Herculaneum,—it is here that one can grasp most easily those peculiarities which fence off life in southern Italy from that of other regions in the peninsula. Here is neither the dignity of Rome nor the

gracious charm of Tuscany, but another world, a life more hot and passionate, more noisy and more sensuous, a character strangely blended out of the blood of many nations—Greek, Saracen, Norman, Spaniard—each of which contributed some burning drop to the quick glow of the Campanian nature, making it both fierce and languid, keen and subtle beyond measure when its interests are engaged, capable of labour, but not loving it, easily depressed, and when thwarted turning swiftly to the thought of blood. Here is difficult material for the statesmen. Never yet, in all its vicissitudes of government, have these volcanic, elemental passions been concentrated on any one great object. In the War of Independence Milan had its "Cinque Giorni"; Venice, led by Manin, struck a glorious blow at the oppressor; but Naples effected nothing till Garibaldi came with armies from without.

How the street swarms with curious figures! I stand aside in the opening of a side lane, and there goes past me a man carrying in one hand a pail of steaming water, while on his other arm he has a flat basket, contain-

ing the sliced feelers of an octopus, and a tray of rusks. At the low price of a soldo you may choose your own portion of the hideous dainty, warm it in the water and devour it on the spot. Close upon his heels, bawling out his contribution to the deafening noises of the streets, comes the "pizzajuolo," purveyor of a dainty which for centuries has been unknown elsewhere. "Pizza" may be seen in every street in Naples. It is a kind of biscuit, crisp and flavoured with cheese, recognisable at a glance by the little fish, like whitebait, which are embedded in its brown surface, dusted over with green chopped herbs. I cannot recommend the dainty from personal knowledge, but Neapolitan tradition is strongly in its favour.

The pizzajuolo goes off chanting down a sideway, and I, moving on a little, still away from the Toledo and towards the older quarter of the town, find that the street was widened out into a small square, the Largo San Domenico, on the left of which stands the famous Church of San Domenico Maggiore, second in beauty to none in Naples, and perhaps less spoilt than many others by the hand

of the restorer. The bronze statue of the saint stands on a pillar in the square, looking down on the palaces which were once the homes of Neapolitan nobles, dwelling gladly in this centre point of the great city. Neither cavaliers nor ladies live here now. The world of trade and civic institutions has slipped into their abandoned palaces, and enjoys the spacious rooms and frescoed ceilings which were designed for the splendour of great entertainments.

On the southern side of the Largo, sloping towards the sea, runs the Via Mezzocannone, which, if antiquaries are to be believed, was the ditch skirting the city wall upon the western side in Greco-Roman days. It is a lane worth following, though narrow and somewhat fetid, for by it one may reach not only a certain very ancient fountain, the Fontana Mezzocannone, which is of itself worth seeing, but also the Church of San Giovanni Pappacoda, and by careful search may even find the bas-relief of Niccolo Pesce, of whom I spoke at length in a former chapter. But my course is eastwards. I turn up the steps, and enter the Church of San Domenico Mag-

giore by a door admitting to its southern transept.

The cool and silent chapel into which one steps is the most ancient part of the church, massive and severe. The first glance reveals that the building must have been in a high degree esteemed a place of sepulture. The tombs are very numerous, and names of mark in the history of Naples appear on every side. Through the vaulted doorway leading to the main body of the church there stream long rolling melodies, the crash of a fine organ played triumphantly, and the grand music of a pure tenor voice, ringing high among the arches. The church is full of kneeling figures, among which others stroll about with little care for their devotions; while children, infinitely dirty, waddle up and down untended, as if the show were for their amusement only.

The chanting ceases, and the priests in their gorgeous vestments stream down the altar steps towards the sacristy. I have come at an unlucky moment! The sacristy at least will be closed till the priests have done unrobing! But no! The hawk-eyed sacris-

tan has marked down the stranger, and hurries up obsequious and eager to detain me. I cannot think of leaving without seeing the most interesting sight in Naples—the coffins? "Si, sicuro! The very sarcophagi of all the princes of the House of Aragon." "But they are in the sacristy," I object, "and that is full of priests unrobing!" "Oh, you English, you odd people," hints the sacristan, with a shrug. "What does that matter?" If he does not care, why should I? And in another moment we are in the sacristy.

Clearly the sacristan knew his ground, and has committed no breach of manners, for among the crowd of ecclesiastics, young and old, which fills the long panelled chamber, some jovial, some ascetic, many chatting pleasantly, others resting on long seats, not one betrays the least surprise at the intrusion of a tourist bent on sightseeing. High dignitaries, arrayed like Solomon in his glory, make way courteously as the sacristan draws me forward, and standing in the centre of the vast apartment points out that the panelling ceases at half the height of the walls, leaving a kind of shelf, on which lie, shrouded in red

velvet, to the number of five-and-forty, the coffins of the family of Aragon, and the chief adherents of their house.

Here, taking what rest remorse allows him, is that Ferdinand who trapped the barons in Castel Nuovo. His son Alfonso, who shared in that and other infamies, is not here. He lies in Sicily, whither he fled at the bidding of the furies who pursued him. But close by is his son, the young King Ferdinand, whose chance of redeeming the fame of his house was lost by death. And here is that luckless Isabella, Duchess of Milan and of Bari, whose husband, Duke Giovanni Galeazzo Sforza, was robbed of throne and life by his uncle Ludovic the Moor, the man who, more than any other, was accountable for all the woes and slavery of Italy. What bitter tragedies were closed when the scarlet palls were flung over those old coffins! Here, too, is the dust of the base scoundrel Pescara, archtype of treachery for all ages, at least of public treachery. In private life his heart may have been true enough, else how could his wife Vittoria Colonna have loved and mourned him as she

did? It is no new sight to see a woman lay great love at the feet of a man who, on one view, is quite unworthy of it. Her knowledge is the wider, and the account as she cast it may be the truer. Why need we be puzzled that we cannot make our balance agree with hers? How is it possible that we should?

On leaving San Domenico Maggiore, my desire is to pass into the Strada Tribunali, the largest and most important of the three streets which still cleave the city as they did in ancient days. The crossways turning up by San Domenico are devious and narrow, evil alleys darkened sometimes by the high dead wall of a church or convent, at others bristling with life, from the foul "bassi," the cellars which are the despair of Neapolitan reformers, where ragged women crouch over a chafing dish of bronze, their only fire, and all the refuse is flung out in the gutter, up to the high garrets where the week's wash is hung out on a pole to dry. Not the freshest wind which blows across the sea from Ischia can bring sweetness to these alleys, or expel the wandering fever which on small induce-

ment blazes to an epidemic and slays ruthlessly. There were high hopes of Naples when the "risanamento" was begun, that great scheme of clearance which was to let in clear air and sunshine among the rookeries. But already the new tenements begin to be as crowded and as filthy as the old ones, and the better era is soiled at its very outset. One cannot make a people clean against its will. And then the sunshine! Week after week it is a curse in Naples. The old narrow streets made shadow, the new wide ones do not. Who knows whether the city will escape more lightly when the next epidemic comes? God grant it may! For the days of cholera in 1884 were more awful than one cares to think about.

Among these devious lanes lies the chapel of San Severo, a shrine which every one should visit, but one concerning which I have nothing to say that is not set forth in the guide-books. Had it been the Church of San Severo and San Sosio indeed, I could have told a grisly tale of poisonings; but that lies far down towards the harbour and we shall not pass it. At length I emerge in the nar-

ALLEGORICAL STATUE IN THE CAPELLA SANSEVERO.

row Street of Tribunals, and turning eastwards behold it running straight and crowded further than the eye will reach, a wilderness of bustling figures, a maze of balconies and garrets, bright shops high piled with fruit and vegetables, and butchers' stalls dressed with green boughs to keep off the flies. At a corner stands the booth of a lemonade seller, one of the most picturesque of all street merchants in this busy city. His golden fruit is heaped up underneath a canopy which shades it from the sun. Brown water jars are reared among the fruit and a jet of water sparkling up sheds a cool dewy spray over oranges and lemons, dripping off their dark green leaves like dew. Many a passerby stops to look at the pretty sight, and the vendor's tongue is never still, "A quarto, a cinque, a sei a sordo, 'e purtualle 'e Palermo." In another month or two his stall will be far gayer, for the figs and melons will come in, and the "mellonaro" will pass the day in shouting "Castiellamare! che maraviglia! so' di Castiellamare! mellune verace! cu' 'no sordo vevo e me lavo 'a faccia!" With a water melon one may drink and wash one's face at

once! Who has not seen the street urchins gnawing at a slice of crimson melon, while the water streams out from among the black seeds, and does in truth make streaks of cleanliness at least upon their faces; for not the widest mouth can catch all the dripping juice.

In this ancient street one is at the heart of Naples. This strong pulse of life, this eager, abounding vitality has throbbed along this thoroughfare for more ages than one can count; and the sight on which we look to-day, the seething crowd, the straight house-fronts, the long street dropping to the east, is different in no essential from that which has been seen by every ruler of the city—Spaniard, Angevin, or Norman, yes, even by Greek and Roman governors—from days when the fires of Vesuvius were a forgotten terror, and the streets of Pompeii surged with just such another crowd as this. It is here, in this most ancient Strada Tribunali, that the traveller should pause before he visits the old buried cities. Here and here only will he learn to comprehend how they were peopled; and only when he carries with him in

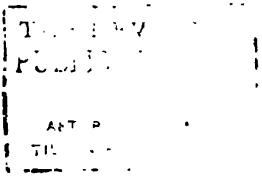
the eyes of memory the aspect of the cellars and the shops, the crowded side streets and the pandemonium of noise, will he succeed in discovering at Pompeii more than a heap of ruins, out of which the interest dies quickly because his imagination has not gained materials out of which to reconstruct the living city.

Neapolis, the old Greek city, was similar to Pompeii both in size and construction. Its situation, too, was not dissimilar. It stood near the sea, yet did not touch it, having a clear space of open ground between its strand and walls, perhaps because the sea was an open gateway into every town which stood upon it, though the nature of the ground partly dictated the arrangement. There is no building, even in the Strada Tribunali, which was standing when Pompeii was a city. The oldest left is near the point at which we entered the street—to be exact, it is at the angle of the Strada Tribunali and the Vico di Francesco del Giudice—a tall brick campanile of graceful outline which, in the confusion of the narrow street, one might most easily pass unobserved. That is the

only portion still remaining of the church built by Bishop Pomponio, between the years 514 and 532; and not only is it almost, if not quite the most ancient building now extant in Naples, but it was the first of Neapolitan churches known to have been dedicated to the Virgin, and it is thus especially sacred in the eyes of the citizens.

Going eastwards still along this most interesting street I come ere long to a great church upon my right where I must pause, for there are associated with it closely the memories both of Petrarch and Boccaccio. Now of these two men I confess to a strong preference for the rake. He was a sinner, and a great one. But for that matter he was a penitent in the end, and had he not found grace, it is for no man to scorn him. Iniquitous though they be, I prefer the record of his warm human passions to the dry spirituality of Petrarch; and to me one tale out of the *Decameron*, with its high beat of joyous and exultant life, is worth all the sonnets in which the poet of Avignon bewailed the fact that the moon would not come down out of heaven.

INTERIOR OF CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLO.



No one who has turned over the works of Boccaccio is unacquainted with the name of Fiammetta. She was of course not least among the seven ladies of noble birth who met in the Church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence on that Tuesday morning when the tales of the *Decameron* begin. She, too, it was whose amorous musings Boccaccio published in a book which bore her name. In fact her warmblooded personality pervades the writings of her lover; and it was in this Church of San Lorenzo that he saw her first, as he tells us himself in the *Filocopo*. The passage is well known to be autobiographical, though occurring in a tale of pure, or rather impure imagination.

"I found myself," he says, "in a fine church of Naples, named after him who endured to be offered as a sacrifice upon the gridiron. And in it there was a singing compact of sweetest melody. I was listening to the Holy Mass celebrated by a priest, successor to him who first girt himself humbly with the cord, exalting poverty and adopting it. Now while I stood there, the fourth hour of the day, according to my reckoning,

having already passed down the Eastern sky, there appeared to my eyes the wondrous beauty of a young woman, come hither to hear what I too heard attentively. I had no sooner seen her than my heart began to throb so strongly that I felt it in my slightest pulses; and not knowing why, nor yet perceiving what had happened, I began to say, 'Oimè, what is this?' . . . But at length, being unable to sate myself with gazing, I said, 'Oh, Love, most noble lord, whose strength not even the gods were able to resist, I thank thee for setting happiness before my eyes!' . . . I had no sooner said these words than the flashing eyes of the lovely lady fixed themselves on mine with a piercing light."

There was sin in that look, though not perhaps by the standard of those days. It was an Anjou princess who won immortality in the Church of San Lorenzo on that Holy Thursday when she was dreaming of nothing but a lover—perhaps not even of so much as that. She was the Princess Maria, natural daughter of King Robert the Wise, he whose tomb we saw in the Church of Santo Chiara.

She had a husband; but no one asks or remembers his name. It is with Boccaccio that her memory is linked for evermore. She was certainly of rare beauty. Her lover, than whom no man ever wrote more delicately, tries to fix it for all time. "Hair so blonde that the world holds nothing like it shadows a white forehead of noble width, beneath which are the curves of two black and most slender eyebrows . . . and under these two wandering and roguish eyes . . . cheeks of no other colour than milk." Item two lips, indifferent red! Why, what a shiver it gives one to realise that not Boccaccio himself can convey to us any real picture of his love! Even the magic of his style, informed by all the passion of his burning heart, can give us nothing better than a catalogue of charms such as any village lover of to-day might write! The dead are dead; and no wizard can set them before us as they lived.

Yet granting that, it is still the spirits of these lovers which haunt the Church of San Lorenzo, filling the large old temple with a throb of human passion to this hour. I saunter round endeavouring to fix my mind

on the details of the architecture, which are worth more notice than they commonly receive from all save students. But it is useless. Every time I raise my eyes I seem to see the subtle radiance of sympathy flash across the church from the eyes of the princess, stirring strange, uneasy feelings, born of young hot blood, and the sensuous essence of the chanting heard in the restless days of spring.

The architecture may wait the coming of some cooler head. I stroll out into the court-yard, full of memories of kings and poets and of Anjou Courts, when the world was splendid, and life was full of colour, and the city not more unhappy than it is to-day.

Among the letters of Petrarch is one written from the monastery attached to this church. The poet lodged there during a visit to Naples in 1342, after the death of King Robert, and gives a vivid description of a great hurricane which struck the city on the 25th of November in that year.

The storm had been predicted by a preacher, whose denunciation struck such terror into the Neapolitans, easily stirred to religious

apprehensions, that ere dark a troop of women stripped half naked and clasping their children to their breasts were rushing through the streets from church to church, flinging themselves prostrate before the altars, bathing the sacred images with tears, and crying aloud to the Saviour to have mercy on mankind.

The panic spread from house to house. The city was alive with fear. Petrarch, not untroubled by the general consternation, went early to his chamber, and remained at his window till near midnight watching the moon sail down a ragged angry sky until her light was blotted out by the hills, and all the dome of heaven lay black.

"I was just falling asleep," he says, "when I was rudely awakened by the horrible noise made by the windows of my room. The very wall rocked to its foundation under the buffet of the gust. My lamp, which burns all night, went out; in place of sleep the fear of death came into the chamber. Every soul in the monastery rose, and those who found each other in the turmoil of the night, exhorted one another to meet death bravely.

"The monks who had been astir thus early for chanting Matins, terrified by the trembling of the earth, came to my room brandishing crosses and relics of the saints. At their head strode a prior named David, a saint indeed, and the sight of them gave us a little courage. We all descended to the church, which we found full of people, and there passed the rest of the night, expecting every moment that the city would be swallowed up, as foretold by the preacher.

"It would be impossible to depict the horror of that night in which all the elements seemed to be unchained. Nothing can describe the appalling crash of the storm wind, rain and thunder in one moment, the roar of the furious sea, the swaying of the ground, the shrieks of the people, who thought death here at every instant. Never was night so long. As soon as day came near the altars were made ready, and the priests attired themselves for Mass. At last the morning came. The upper part of the town had grown more calm, but from the sea-front came frightful shrieks. Our fear turned into boldness, and we mounted on horseback, curious to see what was going on.

"Gods! What a scene! Ships had been wrecked in the harbour, and the shore was strewn with still breathing bodies, horribly mangled by being dashed against the rocks —the sea had burst the bounds which God set for it—all the lower town was under water. It was impossible to enter the streets without risk of drowning. Around us we found more than a thousand Neapolitan gentlemen who had come to assist, as it were at the obsequies of their country. 'If I die,' I said to myself, 'I shall die in good company.'"

If we may trust the story told by Wading, a great historical authority upon the deeds of the Franciscan Order, to which the monks of San Lorenzo belonged, this same prior David, whose aspect Petrarch found so comforting, was the instrument of a notable miracle on this occasion, having kept the impious sea out of at least some part of the city by boldly thrusting the relics of the saints in its track. Petrarch does not mention this, and indeed if Prior David could do so much he is to blame for not having done more, since he might as easily have prevented all the damage done while he was chanting in his church.

As for Petrarch, the storm impressed him so deeply that he told Cardinal Colonna he had resolved never to go afloat again, even at the Pope's bidding. "I will leave the air to birds, and the sea to fishes," he observed very sagely; "I know that learned men say there is no more danger on sea than on land, but I prefer to render up my life where I received it. That is a good saying of the ancient writer, 'He who suffers shipwreck a second time has no right to blame Neptune.'"

Are we not growing a little tired of churches? There are so many in this city, and in the next chapter I shall have to dwell long upon the Carmine, or rather on its manifold associations. Well, no great harm will be done if we pass by a good many of these temples; but one must not be left unmentioned, namely the cathedral, which we have almost reached. A few yards from San Lorenzo, the Strada del Duomo cuts across the old Decumanus Major at right angles, and if we descend it a little way towards the sea we have before us the fine front of the cathedral.

It will be expected of me here that in lieu

of copying from Gsell-fels all the interesting facts about the date of the building, describing the ancient fane of Santa Restituta which has already witnessed fourteen centuries, or detailing the arrangement of the chapels where so much of the noblest ever born in Naples lies mouldering into dust,—it is expected of me, I suppose, that I shall repeat once more the oft-told tale of the liquefaction of the blood of San Gennaro, that miracle and portent which brings luck to the city if it happens speedily, and is a presage of woe when it is delayed. We have heard the story all our lives. But no book on Naples is complete without it, and I will therefore take the description by Fucini, which has at any rate the advantage of being little known in England, to which one may add that it is the work of one who might very truly say what he did not know of Naples, at least in his own day, was not knowledge.

"In the church," says Fucini, "the crowd was dense. Around the altar crowded pilgrims, male and female, shouting, laughing, weeping, chewing prayers and oranges. . . . In the midst of deep silence begins the mov-

ing function. The officiating priest holding up to the people the vase, not unlike a carriage lamp, inspects it carefully, and beginning to twirl it in his hands, cries out with a stentorian voice, 'It is hard, the blood is hard!' At that fatal announcement the people break out into cries most pitiful. The pilgrims weep, some even are like to faint. The saint is slow. The miracle delays, the cries and tears redouble. A group of peasant women who stand near me pour out these prayers, 'Faccela, faccela, la grazia, San Gennarino mio bello!' And if the priest still shook his head they broke out again, 'It is hard! O, quanto ci mette stamattina, San Gennarino mio benedetto. Ah faccela, faccela, questa divina grazia, faccela, faccela, San Gennarino bello, bello, bello!'"

The pilgrims went on chanting, the people crowded round the chapel. In the nave a powerful preacher was relating the life and glories of the saint. The noise of voices rose or fell as the priest signified that the commencement of the miracle was still far off, or gave hopes of its speedy consummation.

At last, when the suspense had lasted nine-

and-twenty minutes, we saw the priests and those spectators who were nearest to them fix their eyes more intently on the vase, with beckonings and signs, as if to say, "Perhaps ——a minute more——I almost think—— who knows?" Then followed a moment of great anxiety, a short interval of silence, broken only by sobs and stifled sighs. The emotion spread, tearful faces and trembling hands undulated in a kneeling crowd. Then suddenly all arms were flung in air, all hands were clapped, the priest waved a white veil joyfully, and like the outbursts of a hurricane the organs pealed out in crashing harmonies, the bells clanged and clamoured through the air, and the high roof of the cathedral rang with the triumph of the voices of the vast crowd chanting the Ambrosian hymn.

If the Duomo had no other interest, the emotion of this oft-repeated scene would create a fascination to which everyone must yield. But it teems with interest. It abounds in relics out of every age of Naples. I cannot convey its charm to any other man. For me the church is full of presences and shadows of the past, kings and cardinals, noble

gentlemen and lovely ladies, hopes and aspirations, and feverish ambitions mouldering together beneath marble cenotaphs and stately wealth of gilding and of fresco. I stand before the monument of Innocent the Fourth, he who had no other word than "adder" to bestow on the great emperor whom he opposed and crushed; and straightway all the tragedy of that terrific strife absorbs my memory, and I am devoured by pity for the fair land of Italy which became the battlefield of two such powers, and which by the victory of the Church and the ruin of the Empire lost a family of rulers more apt for the creation of her happiness than any which has governed the Peninsula from the destruction of the Goths unto our own day. To one who looks back across the years desiring more the welfare of this queen among the lands than the triumph of any principle, it seems a base deed that was wrought by this fine-featured old man, lying here so peacefully in the contemplation of the centuries, his judges. One wonders if he ever saw as we do the rare and precious value of the thing he was destroying, whether the

true nobility of Frederick, his culture, his wide humanity, his strong firm government were really worse than nothing in the judgment of the active brain which throbbed beneath that placid brow. The ruin of the Empire, the concentration of all power in the papacy, the expulsion of the Emperor and all his brood from Italy, it was nothing less than this that Innocent contrived. Not the great Hildebrand himself, whose tomb we shall visit at Salerno, did more service to the Church. The pity is that one should find it so hard to see how that service helped mankind, to whom no consequences seem to have come that were not dire and woeful. But whether good or evil, it was great. There was nothing paltry about Innocent. He was not of double heart. He found a great thing to do, and did it with all his might. In this world of futilities that is much, and very much, perhaps all that can be asked of man with his dim vision. The consequences must be left unto the care of those who see them.

CHAPTER VIII.

A GREAT CHURCH AND TWO VERY NOBLE TRAGEDIES.

THERE can be no question that the interest of Naples deepens as one goes through the ancient quarter in the direction of the east. In modern times the centre of the city is on the western side, but of old it was not so. Castel Nuovo stood outside the city among groves and gardens. The further one goes back in history, the more frequently the court is found at Castel Capuano, which fronts the bottom of this most picturesque of streets by which we have come almost the whole distance from the Via Roma.

In an irregular space, shapeless and crowded with stalls and booths, stands the ancient fortress, long since rebuilt and handed over to the law. The very name of the street in whose narrow entrance we still stand recalls the tribunals. They were all

brought together in this castle by Don Pietro di Toledo, that active viceroy who stamped his memory on so many parts of Naples. But there was a place of judgment on this ground long before his day; and the thing is worth mention.

Opposite the gate of the castle, and within a stone's throw of the spot on which we have halted, stood in former days a pillar of white marble on a squared base of stone. It marked the ground on which debtors were compelled to declare their absolute insolvency. The wretched men were stripped stark naked in proof of their inability to pay, and stood there exposed to the insults of their creditors. This custom, which existed in many Italian towns, was doubtless of great antiquity. The pillar was taken down in 1856, and is now in the museum of San Martino. The people called it "La Colonna della Vicaria." Similarly the Castel Capuano is spoken of as "La Vicaria," a name which gained a frightful notoriety in the days of the last Bourbon kings, by reason of the barbarity of the treatment shown to political prisoners confined there, and the infamous condition of

the dens in which innocent and cultured gentlemen were shut up.

So many streets radiate from the Largo della Vicaria that numberless streams of passengers unite and separate there, while all day long a market goes on beneath the walls of the Place of Lamentations whose secrets Mr. Gladstone laid bare before the eyes of Europe. Nothing rich or rare or curious is sold. Old keys, rusty padlocks, shapeless lumps of battered iron, cheap hats and tawdry bedsteads, with the inevitable apparatus of the lemonade seller, brown jars, golden fruit, and dark green leaves, all dripping in the shade—such are the wares set out to attract the seething crowd which saunters to and fro. If the truth must be confessed the crowd looks villainous. The Neapolitans of the lower classes have not as a rule engaging faces. They are keen and often humorous, intensely eager and alive, eyes and lips responsive to the quickest flashes of emotion. But candid or inviting trust they are not; and as many scowls as smiles are to be seen on the faces of old or young alike. They have their virtues, it is true. They have

THE PORTA CAPUANA.

boundless family affection. When misfortune strikes their friends, they are helpful even to self-sacrifice. They respect the old profoundly, and serve or tend them willingly. They are industrious and very patient in their poverty, devout towards the church, especially to the Madonna, who from time to time writes them a letter, which sells in the streets faster even than the "pizza." There is perhaps in these and other qualities the foundation of a character which may some day place Naples high among the cities of the world; but before that day dawns, many things will have to be both learnt and unlearnt. In this region of the Porta Capuana one sees the people in what Charles Lamb would have called its quiddity. There are low taverns in the house-fronts, haunts of the Camorra and the vilest of the poor. Each has its few chairs set out upon the pavement, and its large shady room inside, with great casks standing in the background. Here and there a barber hovers in his doorway, chatting with a neighbour. At morn and even the tinkling bell announces the coming of the goats, and children hurry out

with tumblers to the wayside where the bleating herd is stopped and milked as custom goes, while all day long the steps of Santa Caterina a Formello are crowded with dirty women sitting in the shade. High against the church towers the great archway of the Porta Capuana, a fit gateway for the approach of kings. What pageants it has seen! The great Emperor Charles the Fifth rode in beneath it on his return from the Tunis expedition, by which he drove out the Corsair Barbarossa from the kingdom he had seized, freed no less than twenty thousand slaves, and dealt the pirates one of the few heavy blows ever levelled at their force by Europe until Lord Exmouth three hundred years later smoked out the hornets' nest at Algiers.

The Castel Capuano did not stand directly on the street in those days when it was the home of kings. It had its gardens, which must almost have touched those of another royal palace, the Duchescha, of which all traces have been swallowed up by the growth of squalor which has claimed this region for its own. The gardens of the

Duchescha were large and beautiful. It was the pleasure house of Alfonso of Aragon, while yet he was Duke of Calabria, heir to the throne from which he fled in terror so short a time after he ascended it.

It was no mere archæological musing which brought this bloodstained tyrant back to my memory, but rather the trivial inconvenience of being trundled roughly towards the gutter by a half-grown lad who was hurrying along the causeway with a bundle of pamphlets, one of which, thrust into a cleft stick, he was brandishing high in the air with an alluring placard announcing that it was to be had by anybody for the price of one soldo. I pursued the boy, caught him under the Porta Capuana, and bought his pamphlet. The miscellaneous literature of the Neapolitan streets is not as a rule of a kind that makes for righteousness, but my ear had caught the sound of the word "martiri" and I had been half expecting some sign of public interest in martyrs on this spot.

The pamphlet gave a fairly accurate account of the massacre of Christians by the Turks who landed at Otranto in the heel of

Italy in the year 1480. So old a tale has of course much interest for educated people still; but what, one asks in wonder, makes it worth while to hawk the story round the squalid streets surrounding the Vicaria, where it evidently commands a sale as brisk as if it were "Vendetta di Tigre" or any other highly peppered work about the social vices of the rich.

The matter will become a little clearer if we push past the half-clad women who sit suckling babes on the steps of Santa Caterina a Formello, and go into that uninteresting church. At the altar rails a priest is preaching vehemently to a languid congregation, while in the empty nave four fat laughing children are toddling round the benches, playing games and calling to each other merrily. There are gaudy paintings and high silk curtains; but the only object that excites my interest is a printed card hung on the closed railings of the second chapel on the left of the nave, which appeals for "Elemosina pel culto dei bb, martiri di Otranto, dei quali 240 corpi si venerano sotto questo altare."

Alms for the worship of the blessed martyrs of Otranto! So some of those twelve thousand who were put to the sword by the Turks in cold blood on a hillside near the city have been brought to this small church in Naples. But why? The answer doubtless is that the Duke of Calabria, who led the mingled hosts of Naples and of Europe against the Turks, brought back these bones as a religious trophy, and placed them in Santa Caterina because it lay near to his own palace. He may have been the more eager about the pious trophy since he brought no military ones. It was the death of the Turkish Sultan, not the sword of Alfonso, which drove the warriors of the Crescent out of Italy.

It is thus clear why the boy was hawking his pamphlets outside Santa Caterina. But what gains a ready sale for them? Well, partly the strong clerical feeling among the lower orders of the Neapolitans, and partly the skill with which the priests play upon this feeling for political ends.

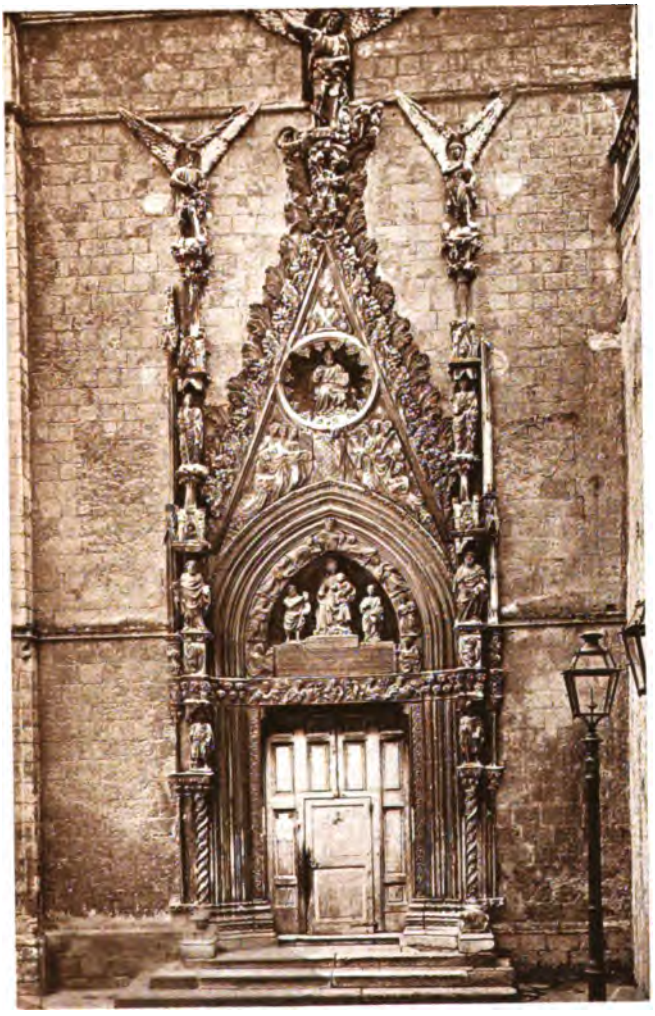
I open the pamphlet, and in its second paragraph I find these words:—

"By this story we shall show that the Catholics are the real friends of the country, that the true martyrs are not found outside the church, that Catholicism is the true glory of Italy, and that the great days worthy to be commemorated are not those of Milan, nor those of Brescia in 1848, nor those of Turin in 1864, but the days of Otranto in August, 1480. May the tribute which we pay to-day to our true martyrs atone for the frequent sacrilege of giving that name to felons——"

No words could prove more clearly by what untraversable distance the Church of Rome is parted from all sympathy with the unity of Italy. That is why I have told this incident at length. I venture to say that in the length and breadth of Britain, where, if bravery is loved, right and justice are loved too, and felons are not exalted, there is scarce one man who can read the tale of the five days of Milan without feeling that there is one of the bright spots in the history of all mankind, one of those rare occasions when what is noblest leapt to the front, and a ray of true hope and sunshine fell on Italy. But in the eyes of the priests this light and glory

DOORWAY OF THE CAPELLA DI SAN GIOVANNI DE' PAPPACODA.

DOOMSDAY OR THE EVELYN DE ROS
GIOVANNI DE ESPINOSA



were mere crime and darkness. Those who fought the Austrians were criminals. It is a hopeless difference of view, hopeless equally if sincere, and if not. I went on a little sick at heart, as any lover of Italy may well be when he contemplates the enmity of State and Church, and that Church the Papacy.

If I were not so eager to reach the Carmine, I should certainly retrace my steps a little and go up the Strada Carbonara to the Church of San Giovanni Carbonara, which contains much that is interesting, and leads one straight to the tragic days of Queen Giovanna. But that age of lust and murder, that perplexed period of woe and strife, does not allure me when I have the Carmine almost in sight; and I turn away past the railway station, and down the Corso Garibaldi till I come to the round towers of the Porta Nolana, the only one of the old city gates which still serves its ancient purpose and recalls the days of fortification. Its twin towers are named "Faith" and "Hope," "Cara Fè" and "Speranza," and when one passes in betwixt those virtues one plunges into a throng which is as animated as the

Strada Tribunali, and considerably dirtier. The life of the people in this Vico Sopramuro is elemental. It has but few conventions and disdains restraints. A tattered shirt, gaping to the waist, admits the free play of air round the bodies of boys and girls alike; the breeches or the gown which complete the costume recall the aspect of a stormy night sky when the rent clouds are scattered by the wind and the stars peep through. It is as well not to loiter among this engaging people. "The Neapolitans," said Von Räumer airily, "were invented before the fuss about the seven deadly sins." I have no wish to make a fuss about those or any other sins so long as they are practised upon other people, and I feel completely charitable to the human anthill when I emerge safe and sound in the wide square of the Mercato.

In this wide market-place, this bare spot of open ground which to-day lies cumbered with iron bedsteads, and piled with empty cases, the débris of last market day, the bitterest tragedy of Naples was played out, and a scene enacted of which the infamy rang through all the world. There is no

spot in the whole city less beautiful or more interesting than the Mercato; and in the hot afternoon, while the churches are closed, and half the city sits drowsy in the shady spots, I know no better way of passing time than in recalling some of the poignant memories which haunt this place of blood and tears.

In an earlier chapter of this book, when I gave a rapid sketch of the succession of Hohenstaufen, Anjou, and Aragon to the throne of the Two Sicilies, I passed on without pausing on the story of the boy-king Corradino, little Conrad, as the Italians have always called him. It is time now to tell the tale, for it was on this spot that the lad was murdered.

I need not go back on what I have already said so far as to repeat how Charles of Anjou defeated Manfred and slew him outside the walls of Benevento, nor how utterly the party of the Ghibellines, the Emperor's men, were cast down throughout Italy, by that great triumph of the Guelf. When Manfred fell and his wife, Queen Helena, passed with her children into lifelong captivity, the House of Hohenstaufen was not extinct. There re-

mained in Germany the true heir of Naples, a king with a better title than Manfred had possessed, Corradino, a boy of five, who grew up in the keeping of his mother, Elizabeth of Bavaria; and as year after year went by found his pride and fancy stimulated by many a tale of the rich heritage beyond the mountains which was his by every right, but was reft from him by an usurper, and lay groaning under the rule of an alien and an oppressor. Tales such as these must have had for the child all the fascination of a fairy story; but as his years increased, and he came to the comprehension of what wrong and injury meant, they touched him far more nearly, and all the courage of his high race, all the spirit which he derived from the blood of emperors and kings, urged him on to strike one stout blow at least for the recovery of that land which was his father's, that sunny kingdom where the blue sea kissed the very feet of the orange groves, and marble palaces gleamed out of the shade of gardens such as the boy had never seen except in dreams.

His mother did her best to scatter these

dreams, and bring him back to the plain prose of life. Italy, she said, had always sucked the blood and strength of the Hohenstaufen, and if she could, she would stop the drain ere it robbed her of her only child. But the task was too great for her. Not from Naples only, which was really full of nobles ready to revolt against the tyrant of Anjou and return to their old allegiance, but from a dozen other cities in northern Italy, where the Ghibellines waited for the coming of a leader, the growth of Conradin to manhood was watched impatiently; and when he was turned fifteen, strong, handsome, and kingly in every act, the hopes of his partisans could be restrained no longer. Pisa sent her embassies to bid him hasten. Verona, ancient home of the Ghibellines, assured him of support. Siena, Pavia, implored him to come and free his people. The task they said was easy and the glory great. More than that, it was a righteous duty to resume what was his own. Many a burning tale of wrong committed by the French was poured into the lad's ears; and the end was that little Conrad broke away from his mother's prayers and

tears, and crossed the Alps in the autumn of the year 1267 at the head of 10,000 men, being then fifteen, and by the universal consent of all who saw him both handsome in his person and by his breeding worthy to be the son of many kings.

At first all went well with him. At Verona he was received with the honours of a conqueror. The mere news that his standard had been seen coming down from the high Alpine valleys drew the exiles of Ferrara, Bergamo, Brescia, and many another city in crowds to welcome him. Padua and Vicenza sent him greeting; and in January he moved on to Pisa, where the same joy awaited him. The Pisan fleet was of high power in those days, and it was sent at once to ravage the coasts of Apulia and Sicily, where it inflicted a sound drubbing on the French. Near Florence, too, Conradin's army gained a victory, and when he moved on to Rome, where Henry of Castile, who ruled the city in the absence of the Pope, had joined his party, the hopes of every Ghibelline in Italy were high and proud, while Charles of Anjou was seriously anxious for his throne.

It was on the 18th of August of the year 1268 that Conradin left Rome. Charles expected him by the ordinary route of travellers which lies through Ceperano, San Germano, and Capua. That route was studded with fortresses and was easy to defend —for which sufficient reason Conradin did not take it. His aim was not to make for Naples by the shortest way, but rather to get through the mountains, if he could without a battle, and to raise Apulia, where he was certain of support, not only from the Saracens of Lucera, but from many other quarters also. So he struck off from Tivoli towards the high valleys of the Abruzzi, through which he found a way not only unguarded, but cool, well watered and fresh, considerations of vast moment to the leader of an army through southern Italy in August. It was the line of the ancient Roman road, the "Via Valeria," and he followed it until on the 22nd of August as his troops came down from the hills of Alba, debouching on the plain of Tagliacozzo, some five miles in front, they saw the lances of Anjou gleaming on the heights of Antrosciano, drawn up in a position which was too strong for attack.

Conradin's army lay across the road to Tagliacozzo, offering battle to the king, who looked down upon the host of the invaders, and liked not what he saw. He had pressed on from Aquila, and was uneasy about the loyalty of that stronghold in his rear. Night fell; but before dusk hid the long line of foes upon the plain, Charles had seen an embassy ride into their ranks, and men said it came from Aquila, offering the town to Conradin. This was what Charles chiefly feared. He would trust no man but himself to learn the truth; and spurring his horse across plain and mountain through the night, he rode back headlong till he drew rein beneath the walls of Aquila, and shouted to the warder on the walls, "For what king are you?" Sharp and quick the answer came, "For King Charles"; and the King, reassured, rode back wearily towards his camp sleeping round the fires on the mountains.

He slept long that night, notwithstanding the hazard which lay upon the cast of battle; and when at length he woke, the host of the invaders was already marshalled along the bank of the River Salto, which formed their

front. Charles scanned their line, and his heart sank, so great was their multitude. In something like despair he turned for counsel to a famous warrior who had but just landed from Palestine, where he had won world-wide renown, Alard de St. Valery. The wary Frenchman did not question that the chances of the coming fight were against Anjou. "If you conquer," he said, "it must be by cunning rather than by strength." Charles allowed him to make those dispositions which he pleased; and thereupon St. Valery placed a strong force of lances, with the King himself at their head, in a hollow of the hills, where they could not be seen. Then he hurled against Conradin two successive attacks, both of which were repulsed with heavy loss. Charles wept with rage to see his knights so broken, and strove to break out to rescue them, but St. Valery held him back, and Conradin, seeing no more enemies, thought the battle won. His men unhelmed themselves. Some went to bathe in the cool river. Others, after the fashion of the day, plundered the fallen knights. One large body under Henry of Castile had pursued

the fleeing French far over plain and mountain. All this St. Valery lay watching in dead silence from his hiding in the hollow of the hills.

At last the moment came, and the serried ranks of the fresh warriors rode down upon their unarmed and unsuspecting enemies. No time was given to arm or form up the troops. Some perished in the water. Others died struggling bravely against the shock of that horrible surprise. The trap was perfect. All either died or fled; and in one brief hour Conradin, who had thought himself the conqueror of his father's throne, was fleeing for his life across the hills, a fugitive devoid of hope. Never, surely, was there so sudden or terrible a change of fortune.

With Conradin fled Frederick of Baden, his close friend, not long before his playmate; and these two princely lads were accompanied by a few faithful followers, the last remnant of what so short a time before was a noble army. All that night they sped across the mountains in the direction of the coast, where they hoped to find some craft which would carry them to Pisa, a safe haven for them all.

They struck the sea near Astura in the Pontine marshes. On the shore they found a little fishing boat; and having sought out the men who owned it, they offered large reward for the voyage up the coast. The fellows demurred that they must have provisions for the trip; and Conradin, taking a ring from his finger, gave it to one of them and told him to buy bread at the nearest place he could. It was a fatal imprudence. The sailor pledged the ring at a tavern in exchange for bread. The host saw the value of the jewel, and took it instantly to the lord of the castle near at hand.

Now this noble was of the Frangipani family, on which honours had been heaped by the grandfather of the boy-king, thus cast up a fugitive and in peril of his life in his domain. The only gratitude which honour demanded of him was to let the lad pass by and escape in his own way; but even this was too much for Frangipani. He saw at once that the ring must belong to some man of mark escaping from the fight, and he bade his servants launch a boat, and bring back the fugitive whoever he might be.

When Frangipani's boat overtook the other, Conradin was not much dismayed. He knew how greatly the Frangipani were indebted to his house, and he did not doubt they would show due gratitude. The poor lad did not know the world. Frangipani foresaw that no boon he could ask of Charles would be too great if he handed him his enemy; and thus not many days had passed when Conradin and Frederick were brought into Naples, and carried through the streets where they had hoped to ride as conquerors.

Even Charles, bloodthirsty as he was, shrank from taking his prisoners' life without some legal warrant. It was so plain that they had played no part but that of gallant gentlemen, striking a blow for what was in fact their right, however much the Pope might question it, or assert his title to bestow the kingdom where he would. He convoked an assembly of jurists, but found only one among the number obsequious enough to tax Conradin or his followers with any crime. Thus driven back on his own murderous will as ultimate sanction for the act he meditated, Charles himself pronounced the death sentence on the whole number of his prisoners.

On the 29th of October a scaffold was raised in the Mercato. The chronicles say that it was by the stream which ran past the Church of the Carmine, a humbler building than that which we see now, but standing on the same spot. They add also that it was near the sea, from which we may conclude that few, if any, houses parted the market-place from the beach in those days, and that the whole of the most exquisite coast-line of his father's kingdom stretched blue and fair before Conradin's eyes as he mounted the scaffold. Side by side with him came his true comrade, Frederick of Baden. The united ages of the boys scarce turned thirty. There was no nobler blood in Europe than theirs, and among the great crowd of citizens there were few who did not weep when they saw the fair-haired lads embrace each other beside the block. The demeanour of both was high and bold. Of Conradin, no less than of another king more than thrice his age, it can be said—

> "He nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene."

He turned to the people, and avowed he had defended his right. "Before God," he said, "I have earned death as a sinner, but not for this!" Then he flung his glove far out among the crowd, thus with his last defiant gesture handing on the right of vengeance and the succession of his kingdom to those who could wrestle for it with the French. The glove was caught up by a German knight, Heinrich von Waldburg, who did in fact convey it to Queen Constance of Aragon, last of the Hohenstaufen blood, of which bequest came many consequences.

Having flung down his gauge, Conradin was ready to depart. He kissed his comrades, took off his shirt, and then raising his eyes to heaven, said aloud, "Jesus Christ, Lord of all creation, king of honour, if this cup of sorrow may not pass by me, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Then he knelt and laid down his head; but at the last moment earthly sorrows returned upon him, and starting half up he cried, "Oh, mother, what a sorrow I am making for you!" Having said this he spoke no more, but received the stroke. As it fell, Frederick of Baden gave

a scream so pitiful that all men wept. A moment later he had travelled the same path, and the two lads were together once more.

So died these brave German boys, and so perished the last hope of happiness for Naples. For if anything in history is sure, it is as clear as day that Naples never afterwards was ruled by kings so strong and just as those whose blood was shed in the Mercato on that October day. As for the slayer, he has left a name at which men spit. Six centuries already have execrated his memory. It may well be that sixty more will execrate it. Yet even while he lived he ate the bread of tears, and the day came when in the anguish of his heart he was heard to pray aloud that God who had raised him to such a height of fortune might cast him down by gentler steps.

There are countless traditions connected with the death of Conradin. Men say that as his head fell an eagle swooped down from the sky, dipped its wing in the blood, and flew off again across the city. Another and more constant tale is that the poor boy's mother, when she heard of his captivity,

gathered a great sum of money to ransom him, and came herself to ransom him, but was too late, and landed in deep mourning from her ship, and came into the Church of the Carmine, poor and mean in those days, and gave the monks all the money she had brought to sing Masses for ever for her son's soul.

These may be fables. But to pass to truth, it is a fact that in the year 1631, when the pavement of the Church of the Carmine was being lowered, a leaden coffin was found behind the high altar. The letters R. C. C. were roughly cut on it, and were interpreted to mean "Regis Corradini Corpus," the body of King Conradin. The coffin was opened. It contained the skeleton of a lad, the head severed and lying on the breast. There were some fragments of linen, which turned to dust immediately, and by the side lay a sword unsheathed, as bright and speckless as if it had but just come from the maker's hands. One would give much to know that the boy-king still slept there with his sword beside him, but when the coffin was next opened, at the wish of one of his own family in 1832, the sword had gone.

INTERIOR OF CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEL CARMINE.

The Church of the Carmine is, as I have said already, a vastly different building from that into which the body of Conradin was carried. Whether the tradition speaks truly of the benefaction of the unhappy mother or no, the fact remains that a splendid reconstruction of the church took place about that time. The origin of the church is curious. The records of the monks declare that towards the middle of the seventh century the hermits of the Mount Carmel, fleeing from the persecution of Saracens, came to Italy, some to one city, some to another. A handful of them rested at Naples, bringing with them an antique picture of the Madonna, said to have been painted by St. Luke, and established themselves in this spot close outside the city walls, near a hospital for sick sailors of which in later days they obtained the site. There they built a humble church, and either found or excavated a grotto underneath it, in which they placed their picture. The image became famous, and to this day is known amongst the people as "La Madonna della Grotticella," or more commonly as "La Bruna." Indeed there was no similitude of

Our Lady of Sorrows in all south Italy which wrought more wondrous miracles or better earned her sanctity; and when the jubilee came round in the year 1500 the Neapolitans could think of no better deed than to take La Bruna out of her grotto and carry her in procession to Rome, which they did accordingly, and many were the marvels which she wrought upon the long journey through the mountains.

But in Rome La Bruna was not well received by the Vicegerent of God. That intelligent and subtle man Rodrigo Borgia was Pope, and his equally keenwitted son Cæsar Borgia was in fact, though not in name, chief counsellor. Both had schemes for which much money was needed, and that money they looked to make out of the jubilee. They looked about them with their practical clear sight, and took note of the fact that La Bruna was very active, working miracles in fact on every side. Had the proceeds fallen into their pockets this would have been well, but as they did not it was ill. Madonnas from other cities must not come emptying the pockets of the pilgrims in that style, or

what would be left for the Holy Father and the ex-Cardinal, his son? So La Bruna was packed off home, and the procession went back through the mountains. I should think the Madonna was glad enough to get out of the Roman stews of the Borgia days, and the Fathers who accompanied her had cause for thankfulness that they escaped without tasting those chalices with which the Pope and Cæsar removed all such as stood in their way.

The wonders of the Carmine do not begin or end with La Bruna. There is another miraculous image in the church, a large figure of the dead Christ extended on the cross. Now in the year 1439, when the house of Anjou was tottering to its fall, sustained only by the feeble hands of Réné, last sovereign of his house, Alfonso of Aragon was besieging Naples, pounding the city without much care for considerations other than mere military ones. His brother, Don Pietro of Aragon, seems to have suspected that the Carmine was a sort of fort, and indeed its conspicuous steeple was used as a battery. Accordingly he turned his guns upon it, and a ball flew

straight towards the head of our Lord, which lay back slightly raised as if communing with heaven. The ball carried away the crown of thorns, and would certainly have destroyed the head also of the sacred figure had it not bowed suddenly, as if it were alive, and let the shot go by. But the miracle did not end there. The ball, though having struck nothing but the light tracery of the crown of thorns, was checked in mid-air, hung there for an instant, and then dropped within the altar rails.

This very striking miracle is famous yet in Naples. Brantôme records it, but in his careless way sets down the wonder as having happened in the days of Lautrec, and attributes it to a statue of the Madonna. King Alfonso when he took the city made a careful examination of the neck of the figure, to discover whether there were not some hidden mechanism, but found none, and became convinced that human agency had naught to do with it.

From every point of view this church of the Carmine is to me the most interesting of all Naples, not by reason of its architecture,

though even that, as I suspect and guess, was beautiful before the hideous barocco passion ruined it. Every nook and corner of it has been filled with vulgar and unmeaning ornament, so that the old graceful outlines are lost for ever. But it is for the abounding richness of its life, both past and present, that I visit it again and again. Standing in the poorest quarter of the city, within sight of the swarming population which crowds the streets and alleys around the Porta Nolana and the ancient rookeries which abut upon the Church of St. Eligio, endeared to the people by the miracles of which I have just spoken, there is no feast or saints' day on which the popolane do not visit it in thousands. I go to see it in its Easter glory. The wide vestibule is packed with women of the people, vilely dirty; and inside the church one can scarcely move through the swarming crowd, surging this way and that, now pressing forwards to the altar rails, where a priest is chanting in a loud monotone, now clustering thick about the image of the Madonna, holding on her knees the lifeless bleeding body of the Christ. The women press forward, kissing her robe

with passion and holding up the babies to do the like. The chairs are packed with men staring vacantly before them, as if they wondered what had brought them there, and over the feverish bustle of the throng the fine grave figure of Conradin rises carved in snowy marble.

The sanctity of this great and ancient church, its propinquity to the Mercato and to the teeming populations of the old alleys of the city, has made it in all ages a central point of that turbulent hot life which fills the history of Naples with tales of blood and terror. The associations of the place are infinite, and would in themselves fill a portly volume were they all set down with the detail which their rich interest demands. One tale there is which must be told in full, for its tragedy is too great to be forgotten, and has indeed rung round all the world.

In the year 1647, when England was convulsed by civil war, Naples had lain for near a century and a half beneath the Spanish yoke, governed by viceroys, some good, others saturated with the greed and covetousness which have made the name of Proconsul

odious since Verres drained the lifeblood out of Sicily. Naples was rich, but not rich enough for Spanish greed. The huge, unwieldy Spanish Empire began to fall on troublous days. The old rivalry with France was pressing hard on the statesmen of Madrid. Europe was unsettled, and war was constant. Fleets and armies are the most expensive toys of nations, and all viceroys were given to understand that the only road to royal favour was to remit more and still more money. Unhappily at Naples the effect of this hint on the Duke of Arcos, who then ruled in the palace often occupied by wiser men, was to set him angling in a well of which his predecessors had fished out the bottom. It was really very difficult to see how another penny could be got out of Naples, but nothing was more certain than that the penny must be found. So the Viceroy, having called a Parliament which met, after the custom of that time, in the convent attached to the Church of San Lorenzo, persuaded that august body to announce a fresh gabelle, to be levied on all the fruit brought into Naples.

Nobody who has visited Naples in the summer, and noted the abounding plenty of the fruit stalls at every corner of the ancient streets—the ruddy grapes, the vast piles of blackening figs, the immense water melons, sliced so as to show their black seeds and their brimming juice, so cool and tempting when the August sun burns down upon the houses,—nobody who has seen how the Neapolitans feed on fruit throughout the scorching dogdays can doubt that to tax it must be dangerous. If the risk was not self-evident, there was example of it to be found in the memory of men then living. Not fifty years before the same expedient had resulted in riot. A prudent governor would have been warned; the more so as the people were already oppressed and sullen, restless and indignant under the unending exactions of the framers of the taxes, and divided by the memory of many bitter outrages from the nobles of native birth who should have been their natural leaders and protectors. Naples was full of a sullen, dangerous temper; but those who were responsible for the safety of the city had not wit enough to understand its state.

The gabelle on fruit was imposed early in the year; and on many days of spring even before the burden of the tax was felt, crowds ran beside the Viceroy's coach demanding angrily that the duty should be repealed. As the warm days drew on, the angry temper rose. Every market day whipped it up to fever heat and set the people thinking of their miseries. It is said—and the thing is probable enough—that many days before the actual outbreak of revolt a rising was being planned by several agents, of whom one was a Carmelite monk. The day selected for its commencement was carefully chosen in such a manner as to secure the patronage and protection of the most popular Madonna of the crowded city; but before it came an accident precipitated the disturbance.

It was the custom in those days to hold a kind of popular game in the Piazza del Mercato, a few days before the Festival of the Madonna of the Carmine. The ragged population chose a captain, under whom they attacked and stormed a wooden castle reared in the centre of the piazza. In this year the lot of the people had fallen on Tommaso

Anello, who in their contracted and musical dialect was known as "Mas'aniello," a native of Amalfi, by origin, if not by birth, driven perhaps into the city by fear of the constant incursions of the Turks, which went near to depopulate the coasts from Salerno to Castellammare. By one account Mas'aniello was thirsting to revenge an insult offered to his wife by one of the collectors. Other writers assert that chance alone thrust him into the foremost position in what followed.

On Sunday the 7th of July the Mercato was seething with life. Out of all the rookeries around the Porta Nolana, and behind the Church of Sant' Eligio, the people poured out intent on frolic. Festivity was in the air—that joyousness which in southern Italy is very apt to smear itself with blood ere night. The women crowded in and out of the churches. The bells chimed. From all the towns and villages on either side of Naples the peasant women had brought in their fruit, and the thirsty people bought it greedily. Among the crowd Mas'aniello and his army of ragamuffins were going up and down armed with canes; when suddenly there

arose a loud and angry bawling, and everyone pressed forward to see what had happened.

It was a dispute between the peasants who brought in the fruit and the keepers of the stalls who sold it. They could not agree which should bear the burden of the new tax. The people's magistrate was called in and decided in favour of the stall men; on which a fellow who had brought in figs from Pozzuoli flung down his basket on the ground, and trampled on them in a fit of rage. The guard, insulted by the act, and still more by the words which accompanied it, seized the fellow and beat him. His cries gathered more and more people. So did the figs, which rolled about in every direction, while the boys scrambled for them, and some laughed, while others shouted angrily, "Take off the gabelle!" The guard tried to disperse the crowd; but scattering in one place, it reassembled in another. Soon sticks and stones began to fly—even the fruit upon the stalls was used for missiles. The guard gave way. The magistrate fled to the beach, with a gang of angry ruffians at his heels, and got

off with difficulty in a boat; while Mas'aniello, reuniting his forces, led them against the office of the Gabelle in the Mercato, wrecked it, and burnt the books.

By this time all the turbulence of the city was aroused; its suppressed passions had found a rallying point, and from every quarter there poured forth an army, ragged and dangerous, carrying for the most part no other weapons than sticks and stones, but roaring with a single voice for the abolition of the gabelle. Mas'aniello seized rapidly on these raw levies, ordered them into bands, and sent them in various directions through the city with orders to break down the stalls of the collectors wherever they found them; while he himself, at the head of a mighty crowd, marched up to the Toledo and down that famous street towards the palace of the Viceroy.

That feeble ruler had come out upon the balcony of his palace to behold the sight. As far as he could see there stretched a forest of angry men and women, a sight most terrible and menacing in the eyes of any ruler. The Spaniard's inclination would have been

to soothe and quiet them with pikes; but he had not men enough at his command, and so tried cooing at them, professing his immediate willingness to do everything they wished. It is uncertain what the result of this accommodating policy might have been if only the people could have heard him or would have waited to attend to the written messages he sent them out. Unluckily neither words nor notes were heeded. The mob broke into the palace and swarmed up the stairs, sweeping away the guards. The Viceroy, impelled by prudence, slipped out down the secret stair, and entering a private coach, attempted to pass through the mob towards the Castel dell'Uovo. His carriage had not travelled far before he met a crowd which recognised him and threatened to drag him out of his carriage. A few handfuls of gold scattered in the air opened a lane through the dense ranks of the rioters, and the Viceroy, taking advantage of the momentary diversion, slipped into the Church of San Luigi and took refuge there. Meantime the mob went on to sack his palace.

It must appear passing strange that no

effort was made by the Spanish soldiery in Naples to defend the authority of the Viceroy. There was a garrison in each of the three castles, and in the length and breadth of Naples there must have been a sufficient number of well-disposed persons to furnish valuable accessions of strength to any central body of trained soldiery. But whether it was that the strength of the garrison had been so far drained off for the wars in Tuscany and elsewhere that the remnant possessed no fighting power, or whether, as seems also possible, the very suddenness of the revolt had paralysed the regular troops, dreading as all soldiers do a conflict with an undisciplined and ardent enemy in the streets of a great city—whichever reason may be the true one, the fact remains that throughout the ten days of this revolt the mob was not attacked, and its disposition to excess was restrained by little else than by its own moderation, which by all accounts was conspicuous and wonderful.

If, however, the Viceroy took no steps to repress the rising by force of arms, it is not to be supposed that he lay idle in the Church

of San Luigi grasping the horns of the altar. By no means. On the contrary, Don Gabriele Tontoli, an eye-witness of these disasters, assures us that the great man in this crisis, while the mob were battering and howling at the doors of the church, forgot nothing which was due to his exalted position, but climbed out nobly on the roof of the church and addressed the people in affectionate accents, seeking to draw them back to the duteous loyalty which they seemed for the moment to have forgotton. Oddly enough these paternal admonitions were little heeded by the mob, who, if they spared a look for the pleading Viceroy on the roof, only roared the louder and battered at the door the harder. Indeed, there can be little doubt that they would have battered down the door ere long, and the Viceroy's position was growing so perilous that Don Gabriele compares it aptly with that of the innocent Andromeda bound to the rock and awaiting the onset of the sea monster. But Perseus arrived, as in the classical tale, just in the nick of time, wearing the odd garb of a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. In

fact, he was no other than the Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Ascanio Filamarino, a man destined to play a considerable part in the coming troubles.

Perseus took in the situation at a glance, and being unluckily unprovided with a Gorgon's head with which to turn the monster into stone, he saw no other way of saving the rhetorical Andromeda discanting eloquently on the roof than by translating some of his promises into actions. Taking his stand, therefore, on the steps of the church, he sent up word through the grid that the Viceroy must instantly make out an order for the abolition of the gabelle and send it down to him. The Viceroy sent it without delay, and the Cardinal, who appears to have been one of the very few men of mark in Naples possessing any credit with the mob, produced an instant sensation by waving the paper in the air. With a singular good judgment he allowed no one to see it on that spot, but getting into his coach, still waving the document high above his head, he drew off the people from the church, and so opened a way for the escape of the Viceroy.

It was perhaps hoped that the remission of the duty on fruit would quiet the city; but greater purposes were already taking shape in the minds of those who led the people. The Spanish tyranny had bitten deep into their hearts, and the very promptitude of their success made them hope the moment had arrived to end many things. The Convent of San Lorenzo in the Strada Tribunali was an armoury well stored with pikes and harquebusses. The crowd, led by a Sicilian who had played a foremost part in a revolt upon his native island, attacked the convent, and fierce fighting took place between the citizens and the small body of defenders who had thrown themselves into the convent. The Sicilian was shot in the forehead, but the attacks continued, and a day or two later the arsenal became untenable, and was surrendered with the cannon and munitions which it contained.

The night of Sunday was full of terror. Throughout the hours of darkness mobs raged through the city; and the excellent Don Gabriele, after vainly endeavouring to sleep, tells us that he got up and looked out

to see what they were doing. They were going by in gangs, brandishing torches which flared and dripped with pitch. For standards they bore a loaf stuck on the point of a pike in derision of its tiny size, the result of the gabelle on flour. Of opposition from the guardians of order there was none at all, and had the mob elected to burn the city to the ground it is not clear what force could have restrained them. The strange thing was that the ragamuffins made so little use of their opportunities. It was as if already, in these first moments of the insurrection, the rule of the leaders was respected. Mas'aniello was busy throughout the night in the Mercato and the piazza of the Carmine, organising, directing, and restraining. He must have had some rare quality of command, some spark of that divine faculty for swaying men which is recognised and honoured instinctively in moments of sharp crisis. Otherwise it could not have happened that the mob, unbridled and passionate, would have gone through the streets by night chanting "Viva, viva il re di Spagna," and abstaining from gross outrages as they did.

Even Don Gabriele, whose mouth is full of fulsome praises of the powers that were, asserts that among the rabble, needy and starving as many of them were, none plundered for himself without being repressed by his companions, while one who did so was instantly tossed into the flames of a burning house, in punishment for an offence which could but bring disgrace on the whole movement.

So Don Gabriele watched the crowds go by, and consoled himself amid his natural fears of what might happen next by the sage reflection that the whole disturbance had been foretold as long ago as in the days when the Book of Ecclesiastes was written. It may probably puzzle even well-read men to discover any reference to Mas'aniello in that sacred book; but Don Gabriele was convinced of the fact, and anyone who desires to verify his references will find the passages on which he relied in the tenth chapter.

When morning came all Naples was in arms, and the authority of Mas'aniello was supreme. In the Piazza di Mercato, opposite the house in which he lived, some rope

dancers had erected a platform for their exhibition, and on this throne sat the fisherman's boy, in trousers and shirt, both torn and dirty, girded with a rusty sword, and delivering his orders like a conqueror, calm and confident in the knowledge of his strength. The business which chiefly occupied his mind was the discovery of fresh arms and munitions. Early in the day, by the secret help of a woman, the rioters had discovered five cannon hidden in the city. Powder they also found, flooded by the Spaniards, but not beyond the possibility of being dried. Meantime most of the prisons were flung open. Hour by hour the forces mustering in the Carmine increased, and already bands were told off to destroy the houses and property of those nobles who were hated by the people.

As for the Viceroy, he saw no resource but in sending messages of peace. For this purpose he released from prison the Duke of Maddaloni, head of the Carafa family, who had incurred the displeasure of the Crown, and despatched him to the Mercato, with instructions to use his influence in any way which seemed to him most likely

to disperse the people to their homes. But, as Don Gabriele remarks quaintly, the people obstinately refused to taste the perfect liquor out of this caraffe, esteeming it indeed rank poison. Nor was their refusal merely passive. On the contrary, they hunted the Duke through the piazza till he fled for his life to the shelter of the Carmine, convinced that he was sent to play them false and delude them with worthless promises, in place of the restoration of the privileges bestowed on Naples by the great Emperor Charles the Fifth, which charter they were resolved to obtain and re-establish.

It is quite clear that the nobles of Naples had no real sympathy with the mob in the most reasonable of their grievances. Had any one among them come forward to support and to restrain them, the issue of the revolt might have been very different. Indeed, the part played by the nobles rankled in the minds of the citizens for many a year; and when, in the next century, the nobles themselves sought to organise a rising, an old man who had been out with Mas'aniello cast it in their teeth and called upon the people to go to their homes, which they did.

But finding that the rioters would have naught to say to nobles, the Cardinal Filamarino went himself to the Mercato. He was received with deference, if not with enthusiasm. The Cardinal was a cunning statesman. "Like a skilful hunter," says Don Gabriele, who is lost in admiration of his wisdom, "he knew well how to whistle the birds into his net." A churchman trained at Rome was scarcely likely to be baffled by the rough sincerity of fishermen and fruitsellers, ignorant of all the niceties which salve the conscience of diplomatists. The Cardinal spoke as one of themselves, as a father to his dear and faithful children. He sympathised with their complaints. He admitted their grievances, even exaggerating them. He commended their courage, and assured them of entire success if only they would be guided by his advice. He showed no horror at the steps taken by the rioters, watching bands told off to destroy houses, or erect fortifications without remonstrance. All his efforts were exerted to gain dominion over Mas'aniello and his followers. To this end he took up his quarters in the Carmine, and admitted the

fisher's boy to audience at all hours. He was aided by the natural piety of Mas'aniello, who looked up to him as little less than divine, and always fell upon his knees before he spoke to him, seeking counsel in every difficulty, with absolute confidence that the church in which he trusted could not delude or trick him.

It cost the cunning Cardinal but little pains to win over a man so reverential and so humble. At the Cardinal's bidding Mas'aniello laid aside his scheme of punishing the nobles by still further destruction of their property, and in reward for this mark of obedience the Cardinal produced the much-desired charter of Charles the Fifth, with an order of the Viceroy giving it validity. On the next day Mas'aniello was to go in state to the palace to receive confirmation of these privileges, and the night of Tuesday fell upon a pleasing scene, the good Cardinal receiving the thanks and blessings of his grateful flock.

During that night, however, somebody, vaguely described as "a personage," was devising an elaborate scheme of murder. Don

Gabriele is sure it could not have been the Cardinal, but he does not tell us who it was. Perhaps some enemy of the worthy Cardinal, designing to filch his credit while he slept, posted the murderers in the very Church of the Carmine, without the knowledge of either the good Fathers or their excellent Archbishop! There at any rate they were, and in the morning Mas'aniello, going into the church, was greeted by a salvo of balls, every one of which, by a miracle naturally set down to the credit of the Madonna della Carmine, flew past him harmlessly. The people, having wreaked summary vengeance on the would-be murderers, were unreasonable enough to suspect the Cardinal of complicity in the crime. But that good man had abundant evidence that it was not so, and Mas'aniello, yielding to reverence again, publicly declared his contrition for the unworthy suspicion he had formed. Whereupon the Cardinal, who was too great to harbour resentment, mounted the steeple of the Carmine and blessed the crowd. But still the identity of the personage is not revealed. Don Gabriele is contemptuous of his folly in thinking to kill the

hydra by a premature and badly devised attack. When the personage tried next his scheme was better laid.

Meantime all went on wheels. An audience with the Viceroy was appointed, and Mas'aniello, having with great difficulty been persuaded to array himself in garments of silver cloth, which splendour he considered quite unsuited to his humble origin, mounted a richly caparisoned steed and rode towards the palace at the head of an innumerable crowd of people. What a change of state was there! On Sunday morning this fellow was among the basest of a great city, not even a fish-seller, but the ragged attendant who provided scraps of paper in which to wrap up the fish. On Wednesday, clothed like an emperor and followed by a crowd which adored him, he rode in triumph to meet the Viceroy of the proudest monarchy on earth. Surely never, save in the wild fantasy of Eastern fairy tales, has fortune turned her wheel so swiftly, or given more lightly what she caught no less rapidly away.

Mas'aniello cast himself humbly at the feet of the Viceroy who raised him in the

sight of all the people and embraced him with tears of affection. Don Gabriele makes no reference to Judas at this point, which is odd, seeing how well equipped he was with apt references to Scripture. The crowd roared with pleasure at the great man's condescension, making such a noise that no one of the gracious words used by the Duke of Arcos could be heard. On this—and the fact was noted as a striking proof of the ease with which the people could be swayed by one they trusted—Mas'aniello turned towards them and laid his finger on his lip. Instantly the roars ceased, and all the vast crowd stood as mute as carven statues. He waved his hand, in sign that they should go, and as if by magic the wide piazza, crowded to suffocation only a moment previously, stood bare and empty. The Viceroy offered him a rich jewel, but he refused it, declaring that it was his set purpose to go back to his lowly station: and indeed, having obtained decrees which confirmed the ordinances of the previous day, Mas'aniello returned to the Piazza del Mercato, doffed his splendid raiment, and put on once more the rags he had

been used to wear when he followed humbly in the rear of his master who sold fish.

The work of quieting the city was almost done. During Thursday and Friday the tumults were steadily repressed; and on Saturday the Cardinal, leaving his temporary quarters at the Carmine, returned to his own palace in solemn procession, followed by Mas'aniello upon horseback. The streets were decorated. The people thanked and blessed their saviours. But already the strain of his position was telling on Mas'aniello. It was noticed that he did not sleep, but was possessed by a feverish activity which kept him sitting all day long in the scorching summer sun, organising, judging, and directing. The constant apprehension of murder weighed upon him; and even on the Wednesday, after discovering the plot to kill him, he was disposed to credit a wild story that the Viceroy had caused the fountains to be poisoned, a belief which could only be dissipated when the Cardinal, sending for a great beaker of fresh water from the fountain of the Carmine, drank it off in full sight of the crowd. Fatigue, excitement, some natural fear of death

—there was nothing more the matter with the lad than a day's rest with some peace of mind would have repaired. But fate gave him the opportunity for neither; and indeed, if one calculates the possibilities before him, the strength of the forces which he had offended, and the treacherous nature of the popular favour which was his only strength, one may well ask whether fate, kinder to mankind than they ever realise, did not show charity and love when she gave him death as the meed of his unselfish service to the people.

It is certain that ere the week was over Mas'aniello began to show signs of unsettled brain, infirmity of temper, extravagance of manner. The people began to be impatient of him, turning rapidly as ever against those who serve them best.

> "Amor di padrone, e vino di fiasco,
> La sera è buono e la mattina è guasto."

The people were Mas'aniello's "padrone," and like the wine in the flask, their favour was sweet at night but sour in the morning. There is no need to tell the history of the next two days in full, or to drag out the ob-

scure conspiracy which culminated on the Tuesday morning. The poor lad knew well what was in store for him, and the knowledge may have completed his mental agitation. The Feast of the Madonna del Carmine came at last, and Mas'aniello went early to the church to await the Cardinal. When he saw the great man coming he ran to meet him and broke out, "Eminence and Lord, I see already that my people are abandoning me and betraying me. Now for my consolation I beg that there may be public procession to this most holy Lady of the Carmine, headed by the Viceroy, and I desire that your Eminence will also join it." The Cardinal embraced the agitated lad, and praised his devotion, assuring him that all should happen as he wished.

The Mass began. The church was packed with people so close that one could scarcely breathe. In the face of this vast crowd Mas'aniello mounted into the pulpit, and in burning words reproached the people for their inclination to desert him, reminding them of all that he had achieved, not for himself, but for them. Then turning on his past

life, with some passionate remembrance of the holy character of the day on which he spoke, he laid bare his sins, calling loudly on the people to do the like, confessing them humbly before God. Then as his passion and delirium increased, he lost control utterly of himself, stripped off his clothes, and threatened to dash himself down from the pulpit on the floor of the church. By sheer force he was restrained, and being led away into the cloister of the Convent, leaned out of an open window which looked towards the sea, seeking to cool his head with the fresh breeze that blew from Capri or from Ischia.

But for the second time the murderers were hidden in the Carmine. In the cloister they lurked waiting for the order of the Viceroy. The order arrived. The murderers came out openly and went along the corridor, calling "Signor Mas'aniello." The lad heard them, and went towards them saying, "What is it, my people?" on which they shot him, and he fell, crying "Ah, traitors and unjust!"

Such was the end of Mas'aniello, a death which at the moment it occurred seems to

have caused no sort of sorrow to the people. In fact, when the head of the Prince-fisherman was cut off and carried through the streets on a pike, there were few found who did not curse it, while the headless trunk was dragged about the Mercato by children in derision. But not many days passed before the instable people discovered how great a loss he was to them. The gabelles were reimposed, bread grew dear again. There was no longer any protector for the people; and by a quick revulsion of feeling, when it was too late, the corpse was dug up, the head reunited to the body, and those funeral pomps accorded which I spoke of in a former chapter.

And so the Viceroy and the Cardinal won the game, as rulers often win it in this world when they cast aside both faith and honour. But for all such crimes history reserves its chastisement. She speaks without fear or favour, and declares that these two princes cut a sorry figure beside the fisher boy whom they betrayed and slew. Both alike, whether spiritual or temporal, are of that poor scum of humanity which merits nothing but con-

tempt; whereas Mas'aniello is heroic, stained by no unworthy action, and bearing himself right nobly in a crisis as wondrous as any in the whole history of man.

APPENDIX.

Page 9. THE story of the French knights who misunderstood the warning shots from Ischia is told in Brantôme's Life of Dragut, No. 37 of the "Vies des Hommes Illustres." Concerning Vittoria Colonna there is, of course, a considerable literature. A pleasant and readable account of her life is contained in *A Decade of Italian Women*, by T. A. Trollope (Chapman and Hall, 1859).

Page 10. The tale of Gianni di Procida is Novella VI. of the fifth day of the *Decameron*.

Page 12. The common tale about the origin of the Sicilian Vespers is that Gianni di Procida, who is sometimes spoken of as having suffered in his own family from the lustful dealings of the French soldiery, and sometimes only as sympathising with the islanders in their intolerable wrongs, went through the island in disguise, beating a drum and capering up to whomsoever he met. If it were a Frenchman, he screamed some mad jest in his ear; if a Sicilian, he whispered some information about the projected rising, which was to take place at the signal of the Vesper bell ringing in Palermo. But for this tale there is no historical authority. Procida had certainly some connection with the revolt; but so far as can be discovered, the actual outbreak was unpremeditated, and the name of the Sicilian Vespers is applied to the

massacre by no writer earlier than the latter part of the fifteen century. The great authority on this subject is of course Amari, *La Guerra del Vespro Siciliano.*

Page 15. Virgil the enchanter. See note on p. 88.

Page 33. It is impossible to give separate references to all the authorities which I have consulted in writing this chapter. The work which I have found most valuable—incomparably so—is the *Campanien* of Beloch, which outstrips both in learning and in judgment all works known to me upon the Phlegræan Fields. It may be said, once for all, that with hardly one exception, the best works upon the region of Naples are by Germans. English scholarship does not appear to advantage. If a man will not read German, he may seek information usefully from Breislak, *Topograpia Fisica della Campania* (Firenze, 1798). Other useful works are :—Phillips, J., *Vesuvius* (Oxford,1869); Daubeny, C. G. B., *A Description of Volcanoes* (London, 1848); Logan Lobley, *Mount Vesuvius* (London, 1889); to which should be added the "Physical Notices of the Bay of Naples," by Professor Forbes, in Brewster's *Edinburgh Journal of Science*, vol. x. All these works treat of the Phlegræan Fields, as well as of Vesuvius.

Page 39. The treatise of Capaccio will be found in the collection of chronicles which bears the name of Grævius, but was, in fact, completed after the death of that great scholar by Peter Burmann. The collection is an honour to Leyden, where it was published full half a century before Muratori commenced his work.

Page 41. This gossip about the Grotta del Cane is

derived chiefly from a small guide to the locality, published early in the present century.

Page 59. Petrarch's account of his visit to the Phlegræan Fields will be found among his Latin verse epistles (*Carm.* lib. ii. epist. 7).

Page 65. Upon the theory that Cumæ was founded so early as a thousand years before Christ, I translate as follows from Holm (*Geschichte Griechenlands*, vol. i. p. 340), the most recent of authorities, and perhaps the most judicious:—"It is scarcely credible that an organised Greek city existed in these regions in such early times. But it need not be questioned that scattered settlements of Greeks were already established on the Campanian coast a thousand years before Christ; and it cannot be doubted that Cumæ is the earliest Greek colony, recognised as such, in the West. . . . Cumæ also became the mother city of Naples, but at what precise date cannot be determined."

Page 72. The dyke of Hercules. See Beloch, *Campanien.*

Page 83. For the Villa of Vedius Pollio, as well as for all the other antiquities of this region, see Beloch, *Campanien.*

Page 85. The story of the Grotta dei Tuoni is one of the interesting pieces of folklore collected by Signor Gaetano Amalfi, to whose unwearied labours I acknowledge gratefully many debts. It was published in the periodical called *Napoli Nobilissima* in 1895.

Page 88. For the stories of the enchanter Virgil, see Comparetti, *Virgilio nel Medievo.* The tale

of the plundering of Virgil's tomb in the reign of Roger of Sicily is taken from the same work, where it is told on the authority of Gervasius of Tilbury. It was a widely credited tale, and will be found also in Marin Sanudo, *Vite dei Dogi*, p. 232 of the fine new edition of Muratori, now (1901) being issued under the direction of Giosuè Carducci, an enterprise which is remarkable both for scholarship and beauty, and deserves the more praise since it emanates from no great city, but from the printing house of Scipione Lapi at Città di Castello, on the upper valley of the Tiber.

Page 104. The traditions of Queen Joanna as well set out by Signor Amalfi in *La Regina Giovanna nella Tradizione* (Naples, 1892), a little work which, though no other exists upon the subject, the British Museum disdains to purchase. Mr. Nutt procured me a copy, though with some difficulty. The book is not as complete as it might be; it contains, for example, no reference to the traditions of the Queen at Amalfi.

Page 112. For Alfonso of Aragon, see Guicciardini, *Istoria d'Italia*, lib. i. cap. 4. Most of my history is taken from this writer.

Page 114. For an account of San Lionardo, as well as for the subsequent tale of the Torretta, see *Napoli Nobilissima* (1892).

Page 129. Niccolò Pesce. See *Nap. Nob.* (1896). Schiller's ballad, "Der Taucher," will of course be found in any collection of his works.

Page 137. The best book on the Hohenstaufen is Von Räumer, *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen*, a very

fine and interesting work. Frederick loved more than Arab art, unless history is unjust. Amari speaks of him and his grandfather, King Roger, as "i due Sultani battezzati di Sicilia."

Page 154. Upon the vexed question where Palæopolis stood, or if it stood anywhere at all, Beloch seems a little wilful, arguing stoutly that there never was such a city. "But," says Mr. Hodgkin, "in the face of Livy's clear statement (viii. 22) as to the situation of the two cities, and the record in the Triumphal Fasti of the victory of Publilius over the 'Samnites Palæopolitanei,' this seems too bold a stroke of historical scepticism." "Italy and Her Invaders." Vol. 4, page 53.

Page 170 *et seq.* See Camillo Porzio, *La Congiura de' Baroni.*

Page 191. Upon the churches of Naples there are two works which surpass all others—namely *Documenti per la storia, le arti e le industrie*, by Prince Gaetano Filangieri, a monument of vast learning; and *Denkmaeler der Kunst des Mittelalters in Unter Italien*, by H. W. Schulz, whose work forms the basis of almost every guide-book published on Southern Italy.

Page 194. This tale of the graceless Duke of Calabria is in Giannone, *Storia di Napoli*, lib. xxii. *ad init.*

Page 199. Those who desire more information on the everyday life of Naples will do well to seek it in Kellner's work, *Alltägliches aus Neapel*, the tenth volume of the well-known series, "Kennst du das Laud," which is sold everywhere in Italy.

Page 216. The account of this storm is in book v.

epist. 5, of Petrarch's letters. The storm may, or may not, be the one which destroyed Amalfi. I know of no evidence pointing either way, save the improbability that two tempests should have wrought such devastation.

Page 221. Fucini's work is called *Napoli a Occhio Nudo.*

Page 223. Any history of Naples will give the facts of the struggle between Frederick the Second and Innocent. See especially von Räumer or Giannone.

Page 227. La Colonna della Vicaria. Signor Amalfi quotes from Voltero, *Dizionario filosofico*, *s. v.* "Banqueroute," the following passage:—"Le négociant *fallito* pouvait dans certaines villes d'Italie garder tous ses biens et frustrer ses créancies, pourva qu'il s'assit le derrière nu sur une pierre en présence de tous les marchands. C'était une dérivation douce de l'ancien proverbe romain, *Solvere aut in aere, aut in cute*, payer de son argent ou de sa peau" (*Tradizioni ed Usi*, p. 123).

Page 231. The facts about the descent of the Turks upon Otranto in 1480 will be found stated briefly in all the histories. But they are sufficiently curious to make it worth while to consult the admirable and detailed report made to Ludovic Sforza, Il Moro, by the commissary who served him in his capacity as Duke of Bari. As ruler of the chief Apulian coast town, Il Moro was of course painfully anxious for exact information about the proceedings of the Turks. The report will be found in volume vi. of the *Archivio Storico*, published by the "Società di Storia Patria," of Naples.

Page 237 *et seq.* The story of Conradin's expedition and death is told best in von Räumer, *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen.* It will be found also in Amari, *La Guerra del Vespro.* The two historians report the circumstances of Conradin's death with some differences of detail, having relied on different chronicles. The variations are not essential.

Page 250. Details concerning the examination of Conradin's tomb will be found in Filangieri, *op. cit.*

Page 256. For the story of Mas'aniello's revolt I have followed Sign. Gabriele Tontoli, *Il Masaniello, overo Discorsi Narrativi, La Sollevatione di Napoli,* printed at Naples in 1648. I selected this work (1) because it is rare; (2) because it is full of detail; (3) because it is the narrative of an eye-witness.

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